Los Angeles Times

$3.66 DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER © 2023 † TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023 latimes.com

4 are fatally shot in desert town

Three women and a man die in Mojave. No arrest is made and few details released.

By Matthew Ormseth and Nathan Solis

MOJAVE — Tina Hayden took in the scene. A dirt lot. Mounds of scrap metal and trash. A trailer and two decaying recreational vehicles, inside of which three women and a man had been shot to death 12 hours earlier.

"They're all on crystal meth," Hayden said. "This is all part of drugs, sad to say."

Hayden had come Monday morning to the end of H Street in Mojave to see the place where her friend's daughter had been killed.

Kern County sheriff's deputies had been called to the barren property around 11:20 p.m. Sunday. Inside an RV, they found four people shot: a man and two women who were already dead and a third woman who would die at a hospital, said Lori Meza, a spokeswoman for the Sheriff's Office.

The victims were not identified Monday. Apart from stating they had not arrested anyone or found the gun used in the shooting, law enforcement officials said little about the mass killing, which rattled the desert community about 60 miles east of Bakersfield.

"I don't even want my kids outside," Hayden said Monday morning. "I kept my granddaughter home from school today."

The killings come several months after a series of mass shootings that left California reeling. In the span of two weeks, six people were killed at a home in Goshen, Calif., 11 at a Monterey Park dance studio and six on a Half Moon Bay farm. The incidents and others have heightened debates about gun control.

About 20% of Mojave's 4,700 residents live below the poverty line, according to census data. Most of its businesses are on the main drag, Highway 14, and cater to people who are only passing through: gas stations and truck stops, fast-food restaurants and liquor stores, motor court-style motels.

East of Highway 14 are tracts of weather-beaten single-family homes. On some street corners are wooden signs with Scriptures written in white. "Judge not lest ye be judged," one read. "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble," said another out-

[See **Shooting,** A12]

Photographs by Jason Armond Los Angeles Times

MICHELLE JIMENEZ, a Huntington Park resident and community scientist with Prospering Backyards, applies the mineral zeolite, which traps lead atoms, on the lawn of her parents' home in southeast L.A. County.

In southeast L.A. County, a chance to save toxic yards

Project brings together community to tackle an environmental disaster

By Nathan Solis

Under the watchful eyes of neighbors, scientists in white lab coats knelt to spread a flour-like mineral over a lawn in Huntington Park.

The dusting of zeolite doesn't take long, but it could be key to mitigating a disaster that has festered for decades across southeast Los Angeles County: lead contamination in the soil around thousands of homes.

"It's 20 minutes of work, and it's a lifetime of lead remediation for a person's backyard," said Aaron Celestian, mineral sciences curator with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and lead scientist with the Prospering Backyards project.

[See **Lead,** A12]

SOIL SAMPLES collected at the home show lead levels that are several times higher than what California considers safe, according to Prospering Backyards.

COLUMN ONE

After prison, he cleaned house

Leader turned on his own gang in a string of murders, witnesses say

By Matthew Ormseth

Ezequiel Romo had been gone a long time.

He went to prison in 1996. When he returned to Panorama City 18 years later, he didn't like what he saw.

He was going to "clean out house," Romo told another veteran of his gang. He would rid the neighborhood of rivals, of informants, of drug addicts and the do-nothings he considered dead weight.

Prosecutors said the 45-year-old made good on that promise: On Romo's orders, members of his gang, Blythe Street, turned on and killed one another in a string of murders that left eight dead, according to evidence presented at a months-long trial that began in March in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Romo used Blythe Street to raise his own standing within the Mexican Mafia, the prison-based syndicate whose ranks he hoped to join, witnesses testified. He put members of his gang to work selling the Mexican Mafia's drugs, collecting its debts and eliminating its enemies. Anyone who didn't go along, prosecutors said, was eliminated.

Testimony and Romo's text messages created the portrait of a micromanager who knew just one response to petty slights and suspicions. Got an unsanctioned tattoo? "Take care of it," Romo told his lieutenant. When the lieutenant, who dutifully orchestrated that murder and several more, got strung out and stopped returning Romo's

[See **Romo,** A6]

The struggle to reclaim a real name in Taiwan

Sam Yeh AFP/Getty Images

INDIGENOUS performers in Taipei, Taiwan, last year. In the 1940s, Indigenous people on the island were forced to use Han Chinese names in place of their own.

By Stephanie Yang and David Shen

TAIPEI, Taiwan — The name on his government ID when he was growing up — and how his classmates, teachers and baseball teammates knew him — was Chu Li-jen.

At home, however, he was always Giljegiljaw Kung-kuan, or "Giyaw" for short, the Indigenous name bestowed on him by his grandmother.

By the time he was a teenager, he wanted to go by his Indigenous name all the time, as a matter of pride. But his parents worried that abandoning his Chinese name would only cause him trouble in a Chinese-dominated society.

In 2019, he finally made it his legal name with the Taiwanese government after Cleveland's MLB franchise — grappling with its own name issues — invited him to spring training. He wanted to ensure that come the next season, the letters emblazoned on his jersey would read: "GILJEGILJAW."

"Honestly I didn't think too much about it," said Giljegiljaw, 29. "I just had the simple notion that I wanted to carry my name on my back, on my jersey."

For the 585,000 members of the 16 Indigenous nations recognized in Taiwan, such decisions can be complex.

As relations with China have soured, more Taiwanese are embracing the island's Indigenous history as they seek a national identity distinct from mainland China, to which more than 95% of the island's popula-

[See **Taiwan,** A4]

WRITERS GUILD STRIKE BEGINS

The union stages Hollywood's first walkout in 15 years after talks with studios on new contract fail.

By Anousha Sakoui

A festering dispute over how writers are compensated in the streaming era came to a head Monday night, as leaders of the Writers Guild of America called on their members to stage Hollywood's first strike in 15 years.

The boards of directors for the East and West Coast divisions of the WGA voted unanimously to call a strike effective 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, the union said in a statement.

Thousands of WGA members were set to walk picket lines across Los Angeles, New York and other cities Tuesday after the union was unable to reach a last-minute accord with the major studios on a new three-year contract to replace one that expired Monday night.

"The companies' behavior has created a gig economy inside a union workforce, and their immovable stance in this negotiation has betrayed a commitment to further devaluing the profession of writing," the WGA said in a statement. "No such deal could ever be contemplated by this membership."

In a statement, the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers said it offered "generous increases in compensation for writers as well as improvements in streaming residuals."

The alliance, which bargains on behalf of the major studios, said it was prepared to improve the offer but was "unwilling to do so because of the magnitude of other proposals still on the table that the Guild continues to insist upon." The alliance said primary sticking points included the guild's demands over mandatory staffing levels and duration of employment.

Writers are seeking a larger slice of the streaming pie that has dramatically transformed the television business. They voted by a historic margin in favor — 98% to 2% — to grant a strike authorization sought by their leaders if they couldn't reach a deal on a new film and TV contract on behalf of 11,500 members.

The walkout, which could last for weeks or months, is expected to halt much of TV and film production nationwide and reverberate across Southern California, where prop houses, caterers, florists and others heavily depend on the entertain-

[See **Strike,** A9]

Yellen warns of deadline on debt

Treasury secretary says U.S. could default as early as June 1 unless ceiling is raised or suspended. **NATION, A5**

Oscars make change to rules

Film academy updates regulations after the Andrea Riseborough campaign controversy. **CALENDAR, E1**

First Republic seized and sold

Regulators sell most of the failed bank's assets to JPMorgan Chase in a bid to head off more turmoil. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather
Cloudy and misty.
L.A. Basin: 62/50. **B6**

7 85944 00200 5

VISIT…

SATYAJEET SINGH RATHORE Associated Press

TIGERS at India's Ranthambore National Park in April 2015. Last month, India celebrated 50 years of conservation of the big cats, which now number 3,167 in the country — more than 75% of the wild tiger population.

India's tigers vs. the Indigenous

Wildlife conservation has forced tribal groups out of forests and hurt livelihoods, demonstrators say.

BY SIBI ARASU

BENGALURU, India — It was a celebratory atmosphere for officials gathered last month just hours away from several of India's major tiger reserves in the southern city of Mysuru, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced to much applause that the country's tiger population has steadily grown to more than 3,000 since its flagship conservation program began 50 years ago.

"India is a country where protecting nature is part of our culture," Modi proclaimed April 9. "This is why we have many unique achievements in wildlife conservation."

Modi also launched the International Big Cats Alliance that he said will focus on the protection and conservation of seven big cat species, namely, the tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, puma, jaguar and cheetah.

Protesters, meanwhile, told their own stories on April 9 of how they have been displaced by wildlife conservation projects over the last half a century, with dozens demonstrating about an hour away from the site of Modi's announcement.

Project Tiger began in 1973 after a census of the big cats found India's tigers were fast going extinct through habitat loss, unregulated sport hunting, increased poaching and retaliatory killing by people. It's believed the tiger population was around 1,800 at the time, but experts widely consider that an overestimate due to imprecise counting methods in India until 2006. Laws attempted to address the decline, but the conservation model centered on creating protected reserves where ecosystems can function undisturbed by people.

Several Indigenous groups say the conservation strategies, deeply influenced by American environmentalism, meant uprooting numerous communities that had lived in the forests for millennia.

Members of several Indigenous or Adivasi groups — as Indigenous people are known in the country — set up the Nagarahole Adivasi Forest Rights Establishment Committee to protest evictions from their ancestral lands and seek a voice in how the forests are managed.

"Nagarahole was one of the first forests to be brought under Project Tiger and our parents and grandparents were probably among the first to be forced out of the forests in the name of conservation," said J.A. Shivu, 27, who belongs to the Jenu Kuruba tribe. "We have lost all rights to visit our lands, temples or even collect honey from the forests. How can we continue living like this?"

Jenu, which means honey in the southern Indian Kannada language, is the tribe's primary source of livelihood; members collect it from beehives in the forests to sell.

The fewer than 40,000 Jenu Kuruba people make up one of the 75 tribal groups that India classifies as particularly vulnerable. Adivasi communities such as the Jenu Kurubas are among the nation's poorest.

Some experts say conservation policies that attempted to protect a pristine wilderness were influenced by prejudices against local communities.

India's Tribal Affairs Ministry has repeatedly said it is working on Adivasi rights. Only about 1% of the nation's more than 100 million Adivasis have been granted any rights over forest lands despite a government forest rights law, passed in 2006, that aimed to "undo the historical injustice" for forest communities.

India's big cat numbers, meanwhile, are thriving: Its 3,167 tigers account for more than 75% of the world's wild tiger population.

Tigers have disappeared in Bali and Java, and China's tigers are probably extinct in the wild. The Sunda Island tiger, the other sub-species, is found only in Sumatra. India's project to safeguard them has been praised as a success by many.

"Project Tiger hardly has a parallel in the world since a scheme of this scale and magnitude has not been so successful elsewhere," said S.P. Yadav, a senior Indian government official in charge of the program.

But critics say the social costs of fortress conservation — where forest departments protect wildlife and prevent local communities from entering forest regions — are high.

Sharachchandra Lele, of the Bengaluru-based Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, said the conservation model is outdated.

"There are already several examples of forests used actively by local communities and tiger numbers have actually increased even while people have benefited in these regions," he said.

Vidya Athreya, the director of the Wildlife Conservation Society in India who has been studying the interactions between large cats and humans for the last two decades, agreed.

"Traditionally we always put wildlife over people," Athreya said, adding that engaging with communities is the way forward for protecting wildlife in India.

Shivu, from the Jenu Kuruba tribe, also wants to go back to a life where Indigenous communities and tigers lived together.

"We consider them gods and us the custodians of these forests," he said.

Arasu writes for the Associated Press.

'El Chapo' sons fuel U.S. crisis with cheap fentanyl, officials say

BY CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN AND MARK STEVENSON

MEXICO CITY — With Sinaloa cartel boss Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán serving a life sentence, his sons steered the family business into fentanyl, establishing a network of labs churning out massive quantities of the cheap, deadly drug that they smuggled into the U.S., prosecutors revealed in a recent indictment.

Although Guzmán's trial revolved around cocaine shipments, the case against his sons exposes the inner workings of a cartel undergoing a generational shift as it worked "to manufacture the most potent fentanyl and to sell it in the United States at the lowest price," according to the indictment unsealed April 14 in Manhattan.

Synthetic opioids — mostly fentanyl — claim more American lives every year than the Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars combined, feeding an argument among some politicians that the cartels should be branded terrorist organizations and prompting once-unthinkable calls for U.S. military intervention across the border.

"The problem with fentanyl, as some people at the State Department told me, has to be repositioned. It's not a drug problem; it's a poisoning problem," said Alejandro Hope, a security analyst in Mexico, who died Friday. "Very few people go out deliberately looking for fentanyl."

Hope predicted that fentanyl would probably become an issue in next year's U.S. elections, but he opposed any threat of U.S. intervention, saying, "I don't think that would be a very good way of addressing a public health issue."

The groundwork for the U.S. fentanyl epidemic was laid more than 20 years ago, with aggressive overprescribing of the synthetic opioid oxycodone. As U.S. authorities clamped down on its prescription, users moved to heroin, which the Sinaloa cartel supplied.

But making its own fentanyl — far more potent and versatile than heroin — in small, easily concealed labs was a game changer. The cartel went from its first makeshift fentanyl lab to a network of labs concentrated in the northern state of Sinaloa in less than a decade.

"These are not super labs, because they give people the illusion that they're like pharmaceutical labs, you know, very sophisticated," said Mike Vigil, former head of international operations for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. "These are nothing more than metal tubs, and they use wooden paddles — even shovels — to mix the chemicals."

A single cartel "cook" can press fentanyl into 100,000 counterfeit pills every day to fool Americans into thinking they're taking Xanax, Percocet or oxycodone. The pills are smuggled over the border to supply what the kingpin's son Iván Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar said are "streets of junkies," the indictment said.

Fentanyl is so cheap to make that the cartel reaps massive profits even wholesaling the drug at 50 cents per pill, prosecutors said.

The drug's potency makes it particularly dangerous. The narcotic dose of fentanyl is so close to the lethal dose that a pill meant to ensure a high for a habituated user can easily kill a less experienced person taking something they didn't know was fentanyl.

Between August 2021 and August of last year, more than 107,000 Americans died of drug overdoses, most from synthetic opioids. Last year, the DEA seized more than 57 million fentanyl-laced counterfeit prescription pills, according to the New York indictment.

To protect and expand that business, the "Chapitos," as the sons are known, have turned to grotesque violence, prosecutors said.

Enforcers Iván Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar and Jesus Alfredo Guzmán Salazar are the lead defendants among 23 associates charged in the New York indictment. Their half-brother Ovidio Guzmán López, alias "the Mouse," who allegedly pushed the cartel into fentanyl, is charged in another indictment in the same district. Mexico arrested him in January and the U.S. government has requested extradition. Another half-brother Joaquín Guzmán López is charged in the Northern District of Illinois.

According to the Guzmán Salazar indictment, the cartel does some lab testing on its product but conducts more grisly human testing on kidnapped rivals or addicts who are injected until they overdose.

The purity of the cartel's fentanyl "varies greatly depending on the method and skill of the particular manufacturer," prosecutors noted. After a user overdosed on one batch, it was still shipped to the U.S.

When the elder Guzmán and Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada led the Sinaloa cartel, it operated with a certain degree of restraint. But with Guzmán serving a life sentence and Zambada believed to be suffering from health issues, the Chapitos moved aggressively to avoid a power vacuum that could fragment the cartel.

"What was really a unique advantage of the Sinaloa cartel and El Chapo was the ability to calibrate violence," said Vanda Felbab-Brown, a senior fellow in the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology at the Brookings Institute.

The wide-ranging New York indictment against the Guzmán Salazar brothers details their penchant for feeding enemies to their pet tigers and describes how they tortured two Mexican federal agents, ripping through one's muscles with a corkscrew then stuffing the holes with chile peppers before shooting him.

The indictment also provides context to some recent violence in Mexico.

In August 2022, gunmen shot up Ciudad Juarez, across from El Paso. Two prison inmates and nine civilians in the city were killed. U.S. prosecutors say the Chapitos' security arm ordered their local gang associates to commit the violence, targeting a rival cartel's businesses.

"This is not their father's Sinaloa cartel," Felbab-Brown said. "These guys just operate in very different mind-sets than their father."

The Guzmán Salazar indictment makes an initial attempt at disrupting the cartel's supply chain, naming four people tied to a China-based chemical company and a broker in Guatemala who allegedly helped the cartel get the chemicals and even instructed them on the best recipes for fentanyl.

"When they talk about labs and you're trying to focus in on labs, that's not going to have an impact unless you get the finished product or the precursor chemicals," Vigil said.

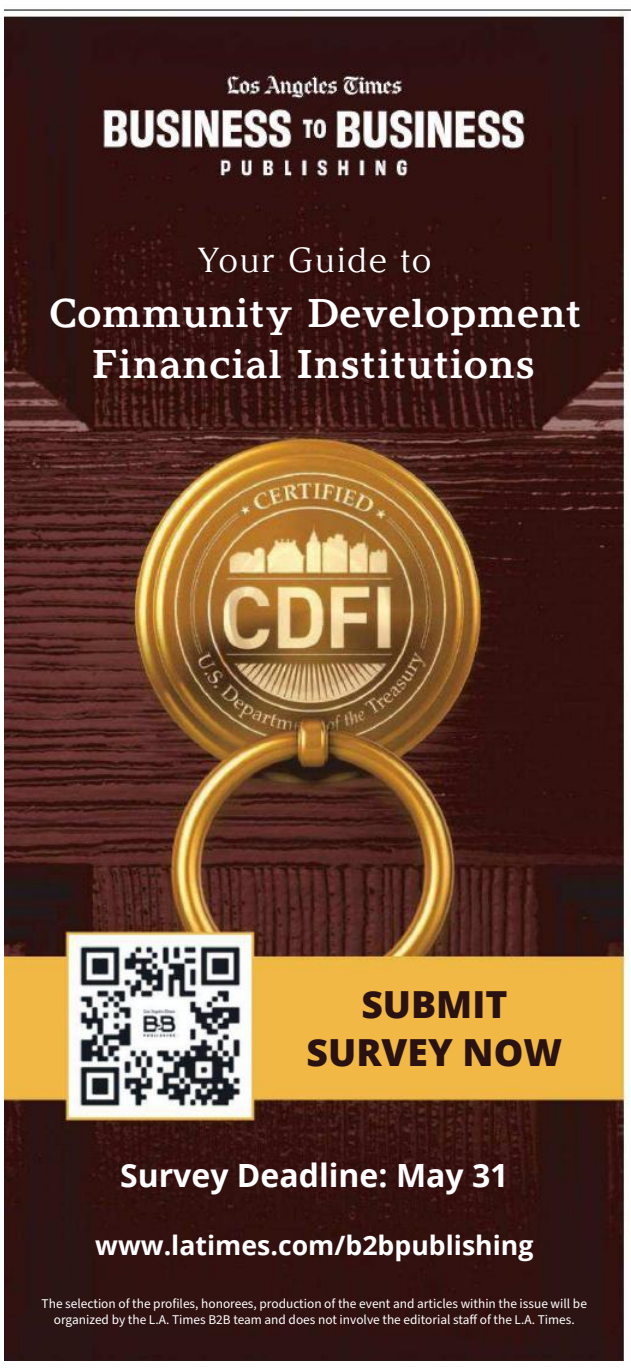
Mexico's government has stumbled through the mixed messaging of its security forces playing up their decommissioning of labs even while President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has asserted that fentanyl is not being produced in Mexico.

In congressional testimony Thursday, DEA Administrator Anne Milgram was pressed about whether Mexico and China are doing enough to cooperate with the United States.

"We want the Mexicans to work with us and we want them to do more," Milgram said, adding that the DEA wouldn't hesitate to go after officials in Mexico or elsewhere should it find evidence of ties to the cartels.

Experts say López Obrador is one obstacle to slowing the cartels' fentanyl production. After U.S. prosecutors announced the effort against the Sinaloa cartel, López Obrador accused the U.S. of "spying" and "interference," suggesting that the case had been built on information gathered by U.S. agents in Mexico.

Sherman and Stevenson write for the Associated Press.


Los Angeles Times
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
PUBLISHING
Your Guide to
Community Development
Financial Institutions
CERTIFIED
CDFI
U.S. Department of the Treasury
SUBMIT
SURVEY NOW
Survey Deadline: May 31
www.latimes.com/b2bpublishing
The selection of the profiles, honorees, production of the event and articles within the issue will be organized by the L.A. Times B2B team and does not involve the editorial staff of the L.A. Times.

Los Angeles Times
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
PUBLISHING
THE
C-SUITE
MAGAZINE
Trends. Updates. Visionaries.
Inviting CA-based CEOs
to be nominated!
Deadline: May 19
NOMINATE NOW!
www.latimes.com/b2bpublishing
The selection of the profiles, honorees, production of the event and articles within the issue will be organized by the L.A. Times B2B team and does not involve the editorial staff of the L.A. Times.

McCarthy addresses Knesset amid fraught ties

Republican gets honor of speaking in Israel's parliament, in what some see as a dig at President Biden.

By Ilan Ben Zion and Tia Goldenberg

Ohad Zwigenberg Associated Press

HOUSE SPEAKER Kevin McCarthy rekindles the eternal flame at Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem. Monday's visit was another sign of Israel becoming a wedge issue in U.S. politics.

JERUSALEM — The U.S. House speaker addressed Israel's parliament on Monday, a rare honor awarded to the highest-ranking Republican in American politics at a time of fraught relations between Israel's government and President Biden, a Democrat.

Speaker Kevin McCarthy and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu portrayed the speech as a nod to bipartisan U.S. support for Israel as it marks 75 years since its creation. Critics say the platform given to McCarthy — he's only the second House speaker to address the Knesset, after Newt Gingrich in 1998 — is a pointed jab at Biden.

McCarthy (R-Bakersfield) spoke to the Knesset, greeted by frequent applause and a standing ovation, as lawmakers returned from a monthlong recess. They are expected to resume the fight over a contentious plan, promoted by the most right-wing government in Israel's history, to overhaul the judiciary.

The plan has split Israelis and drawn a rare public rebuke from Biden. Amid the tensions, Biden has so far denied Netanyahu a typically customary invitation to the White House after his election win late last year.

In a challenge to Biden, McCarthy said Monday that he expects the White House "to invite the prime minister over for a meeting, especially with the 75th anniversary" of Israel's independence. He said he would invite Netanyahu to speak to Congress if Biden doesn't.

McCarthy's visit to Israel was another sign of the gradual transformation of Israel from a bipartisan matter into a wedge issue in U.S. politics. The trend goes back more than a decade, when Netanyahu began openly siding with Republicans against Democrats. At the same time, some younger progressive Democrats have become increasingly critical of Israeli policies, including the treatment of Palestinians.

McCarthy addressed the Knesset at a time when both Republicans and Democrats are steeling for presidential nomination races. Republicans are seeking to present themselves to voters, especially to evangelical Christians, as the best ally to Israel.

McCarthy and Netanyahu met before the Knesset address and the Republican lavished praise on the prime minister, saying his "leadership, character and courage" inspire Americans.

The Californian said the U.S. "cherishes its unbreakable bond" with Israel, pledged continued funding for security assistance, and said the countries must "remain resolute in our commitment that Iran will never acquire a nuclear weapon."

In Washington, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby sidestepped questions about McCarthy's suggestion that he could invite Netanyahu to speak to Congress separate of a White House visit. Kirby said that he expected Netanyahu would visit the White House at some point but said no visit was planned at the moment.

"I think we've seen Speaker McCarthy's comments and we'll let him speak to those comments and whatever his intentions are," Kirby said. "What I can speak to is the long-standing unwavering support President Biden has already provided to the people in Israel over many, many decades of public service."

Before the parliament recess, Netanyahu had paused judicial overhaul plans under intense pressure, which has included large weekly protests, a labor strike and threats by military reservists to stop showing up for duty. Biden waded into the criticism, saying Netanyahu "cannot continue down this road."

While Netanyahu and Biden have known each other for decades, their relationship has soured since the prime minister returned to office late last year. The Biden administration has voiced unease about Netanyahu's government, made up of ultranationalists who were once on the fringes of Israeli politics and now hold senior positions dealing with the Palestinians and other sensitive issues.

Over the years, Netanyahu, a lifelong conservative with American-accented English and deep ties to the U.S., hasn't hidden his Republican leanings even as he's spoken of the importance of keeping Israel a bipartisan issue.

In 2015, he delivered a speech to Congress against the Iran nuclear deal that was widely seen as a slight against the Obama administration, which negotiated the agreement. He was accused of backing Republican Mitt Romney's candidacy for president and was one of President Trump's closest international supporters.

That Republican tilt has tested ties with American Jews, most of whom lean Democratic.

Eytan Gilboa, an expert on U.S.-Israel relations, said that there's been "serious damage" to Israel's ties to Washington, and that Netanyahu "broke the bipartisanship" surrounding Israel. The McCarthy visit, he said, was a way for both Republicans and Netanyahu to stick it to Biden.

"Netanyahu thinks that if McCarthy visits here it will put pressure on the White House to invite him," Gilboa said. "Republicans are fighting over who's the greatest supporter of Israel."

The White House snub is another sore point for the embattled prime minister, whose legal plan has set off one of Israel's worst domestic crises, sent his Likud Party tanking in public opinion polls and tarnished the 73-year-old leader's legacy.

The parliamentary break has allowed Israelis to take stock of the tensions set off by the legal plan, which had been proceeding at a feverish pace in the previous session and had reached a boiling point after Netanyahu dismissed his dissenting defense minister.

The future of the plan is unclear. Netanyahu said he was temporarily suspending the drive to change Israel's judicial system to allow the coalition and the opposition to come to a negotiated compromise. But the talks don't appear to have produced many agreements and Netanyahu's allies are pushing him to move ahead if the negotiations fail.

He's also facing pressure from the streets — tens of thousands of people who support the overhaul filled the area near parliament on Thursday as a show of force in favor of the legal changes. Protests against the overhaul have continued for 17 weeks, including during the parliament recess, with as much intensity.

Netanyahu is expected to keep a focus on less divisive issues in the coming weeks, such as passing a budget at a time when Israel's economy is on shaky ground and inflation is rising.

But he will face hurdles. He is up against a court-ordered deadline in July, which requires the government to legislate a military draft law about the near-blanket exemptions enjoyed by members of Israel's ultra-Orthodox community.

Instead of serving in the country's compulsory military, like the majority of secular Jews, ultra-Orthodox men are allowed to study religious texts. Experts say this system keeps the growing community cloistered and does not encourage its integration into the workforce, something seen as necessary to safeguard the future of Israel's economy.

Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption, and his allies say the overhaul is necessary to rein in an interventionist legal system that has taken power away from elected politicians. They want to weaken the Supreme Court, give the government control over who becomes a judge and reduce judicial oversight on legislation.

Critics say the changes will upend Israel's fragile system of checks and balances and imperil the country's democratic foundations.

Ben Zion and Goldenberg write for the Associated Press.

Rival generals in Sudan agree to talks, envoy says

U.N. official relays that two sides plan to send representatives, possibly to Saudi Arabia. Clashes go on.

By Samy Magdy

Smowal Abdalla Associated Press

AMERICANS are searched by U.S. soldiers before boarding a ship in Port Sudan on Sunday. Another extension of a cease-fire in Sudan didn't halt all fighting.

CAIRO — Sudan's warring generals have agreed to send representatives for negotiations, potentially in Saudi Arabia, the top United Nations official in the country said Monday, even as the two sides clashed in the capital, Khartoum, despite another three-day extension of a fragile cease-fire.

If the talks come together, they would initially focus on establishing a "stable and reliable" cease-fire, Volker Perthes said. However, he warned of challenges in holding the negotiations.

A string of temporary truces over the last week has eased fighting only in some areas while fierce battles have continued elsewhere, driving civilians from their homes and pushing Sudan further into disaster.

Humanitarian groups have been trying to restore the flow of help to a country where nearly a third of the population of 46 million relied on international aid even before the explosion of violence. The U.N. food agency on Monday said it was ending the temporary suspension of its operations in Sudan, put in place after three of its team members were killed in the war-wrecked Darfur region early in the fighting.

The World Food Program will resume food distribution in four provinces — Qadarif, Gezira, Kassala and White Nile — working in areas where security permits, Executive Director Cindy McCain said. The numbers of those needing help will "grow significantly as fighting continues," she said. "To best protect our necessary humanitarian workers and the people of Sudan, the fighting must stop."

A day earlier, the International Committee of the Red Cross flew in a planeload of medical supplies to bring some relief to hospitals overwhelmed by the mayhem.

Direct talks, if they take place, would be significant progress since fighting erupted on April 15 between the army and a rival paramilitary group called the Rapid Support Forces. For much of the conflict, army chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and RSF commander Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo have appeared determined to fight to the end.

Their power struggle has put millions of Sudanese in the line of gun battles, artillery bombardments and airstrikes. Tens of thousands have fled Khartoum and other cities, and more than two-thirds of hospitals in areas with active fighting are out of service, with fighters looting the dwindling supplies.

At least 436 civilians have been killed and more than 1,200 injured since the fighting began, according to figures on Monday from the Doctors' Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties. As of a week ago, the Sudanese Health Ministry had counted at least 530 people killed, including civilians and combatants, with an additional 4,500 wounded, but those figures haven't been updated since.

Since Saturday, the United States has been conducting daily evacuations of American civilians from Sudan. On Monday, the third U.S.-assisted evacuation convoy of American citizens and permanent U.S. residents arrived in Port Sudan on the Red Sea coast.

The U.S. had "a handful" of consular officials at the Sudanese port, helping the American civilians get onto ferries or Saudi or U.S. Navy ships to cross the Red Sea to safety in Saudi Arabia.

The State Department said Monday that it has helped roughly 700 people — U.S. citizens or permanent residents, or local workers at the now-shuttered American Embassy — out on the bus convoys. It says it has assisted about 1,000 other Americans in getting out of Sudan.

Explosions and gunfire echoed in parts of Khartoum and its neighboring city, Omdurman, on Monday, residents said, hours after the two sides committed to the 72-hour cease-fire extension.

Atiya Abdulla Atiya, secretary of the Doctors' Syndicate, said there was fighting early Monday in parts of Khartoum, including the military's headquarters, the Republican Palace, and the international airport. There were also clashes in the upscale neighborhood of Kafouri, he said.

Many Khartoum hospitals remained out of service or inaccessible because of the fighting, while others have been occupied by the warring factions, particularly the RSF, he said.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have led an international push to get the generals to stop fighting, then engage in deeper negotiations to resolve the crisis.

Speaking from Port Sudan, Perthes said there are still daunting challenges in getting the two warring sides to abide by a real halt in fighting. One possibility was to establish a monitoring mechanism that includes Sudanese and foreign observers, "but that has to be negotiated," he said.

Talks on a sustained cease-fire could take place in either Saudi Arabia or South Sudan, he said, adding that the former may be easier logistically — though each side would need safe passage through the other's territory. "That is very difficult in a situation where there is a lack of trust," he said.

Dagalo, the RSF commander, said the paramilitary has named its representatives to the talks but that trust-building measures have to be in place first. "A settlement should come after other matters: First, a cease-fire and building the trust," he told Asharq, a Saudi-based TV station.

For the last week, people have been streaming out of Khartoum and other urban areas torn by fighting, moving in droves to wherever they can find safety.

In Port Sudan, thousands were camped out, hoping to get onto evacuation ferries. Many families, including small children, have been sleeping outside for days, including hundreds of Syrians and Yemenis unable so far to get on boats.

"Most of the people are sitting on their bags," said one Syrian, Mohamed Amr Mustafa.

More than 70,000 South Sudanese refugees who had been living in Khartoum have fled to the neighboring White Nile province, settling in already overcrowded camps, said Mustafa Amr Abarou, a spokesman for the Sudanese refugee agency. At least 10 trucks a day of people fleeing Khartoum continue to arrive, straining the agency's abilities, he said. Sudan hosts more than 1.3 million refugees, including 800,000 from South Sudan, according to U.N. figures.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi warned Monday of many more fleeing Sudan. "If violence doesn't stop we will see more people forced to flee Sudan seeking safety," he wrote on Twitter.

The eruption of fighting capped months of worsening Burhan-Dagalo disputes as the international community tried to work out a deal for establishing civilian rule.

"We all saw the enormous tensions," Perthes said. "Our efforts to de-escalate did not succeed." He said he had been warning repeatedly that "any single spark" could cause the power struggle to explode.

Perthes warned of a "major humanitarian crisis" as people were running out of food and fresh water in Khartoum and the fighting damaged water systems.

A real cease-fire is vital to getting access to residents who are trapped in their homes or injured, he said. "If we don't get a stable cease-fire ... the humanitarian situation will be even worse."

Magdy writes for the Associated Press. AP writers Nick El Hajj in Dubai and Matthew Lee in Washington contributed to this report.

Seeking to reclaim Indigenous names in Taiwan

[**Taiwan,** from A1]
tion can trace its roots. Yet, dissuaded by bureaucratic hurdles and fears of discrimination, only about 5% of Indigenous people use their native names in some form on their legal IDs today.

Ethnic Han Chinese began relocating to the island in large numbers during the 17th century. Migration surged again after the second World War when the Chinese Nationalist Party, better known as the Kuomintang, or KMT, took control of the island in 1945.

Only about 2.5% of the island's population is of Austronesian descent, with ancestors preceding Japanese, Chinese and Dutch settlers in the early 1600s. To promote a national Chinese identity, the KMT forced those people to use Han Chinese names in place of their own customs, which vary by Indigenous tribe but often include passing down a parent name or clan name instead of the surname familiar to Chinese or English names.

"Our constitution says we are China, but that's the history that the KMT brought over," said Ljegay Qeludu, a 32-year-old Indigenous graduate student at National Chengchi University. "That history has nothing to do with mine."

Formerly registered as Chiu Tzu-chieh, he decided to officially go by his Paiwan name in 2015, spending hours at various government offices revising legal documents over the course of a week.

Using his Indigenous surname to book a dinner reservation has often resulted in confusion, he said. And on trips to Japan and New Zealand, he's had to spend additional time at immigration, explaining why his name is twice as long as most other Taiwanese travelers. Still, he said, the minor headaches have been worth expressing his Indigenous identity.

"It's really annoying," he said. "But I think I can also use these experiences to let everyone know more about Taiwan."

Few are willing to spend time amending credentials such as IDs, driving licenses, health insurance and bank accounts. And those who adopt the often longer names can draw unwanted questions or social prejudice, some say.

In the nearly three decades since such changes became legal, hundreds of Indigenous people have returned to their Han Chinese names because of discrimination or stereotypes, said Wang Ya-ping, an associate professor of ethnic studies at National Chengchi University.

Another barrier is how those names are written on official documents. Indigenous people are allowed to use either a traditional Han Chinese name or a Chinese transliteration of their native name, which many complain sounds clunky and imprecise. They can also include what is known in Taiwan as the "Romanization" of the Indigenous name, which means that it is written out phonetically with the Latin letters used in English and other Western languages — the same way Giljegiljaw's name was displayed on his Cleveland uniform.

Now some are fighting to drop the Chinese characters altogether.

In 2021, a group of Indigenous activists sought approval from local government agencies to write their names only in Latin letters, which they argued were better suited to the pronunciation and preservation of Indigenous languages passed down orally. The Ministry of the Interior rejected the petition that year on the basis that most Taiwanese people wouldn't be able to read the names.

This year, the ministry said it would follow the direction of the executive branch of Taiwan's government, which said it was considering the issue and held a meeting in August to discuss using Indigenous languages to register names.

One of the activists, Savungaz Valincinan, still remembers slights she suffered because of Indigenous stereotypes growing up with a Han Chinese father and a mother from Taiwan's Bunun tribe.

A schoolteacher, she recalled, commented that even though she was Indigenous, she didn't look like she could run very fast. An Indigenous friend said Savungaz didn't seem like she could hold her alcohol like other Bunun people — that night she drank herself sick to prove him wrong.

"It's not because I want to choose between my mother and my father," the 36-year-old said of her decision to change her name. "Growing up, I spent so much time becoming a model Han Chinese person. But there wasn't enough time to learn about my mother's culture, or to become someone from the Bunun tribe."

Like Savungaz, those who have reverted to their Indigenous names said their choices have more to do with embracing their personal identity than rejecting Chinese culture. But Taiwanese identity — and its links to mainland China — has become a politically divisive topic as relations between Beijing and Taipei further sour.

China considers Taiwan a part of its territory, and President Xi Jinping has stressed the importance of eventual unification, using increased military posturing as a cudgel. After Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen met with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield) in Southern California recently, Beijing launched a three-day military drill to express its displeasure, practicing precision strikes and a blockade of the island.

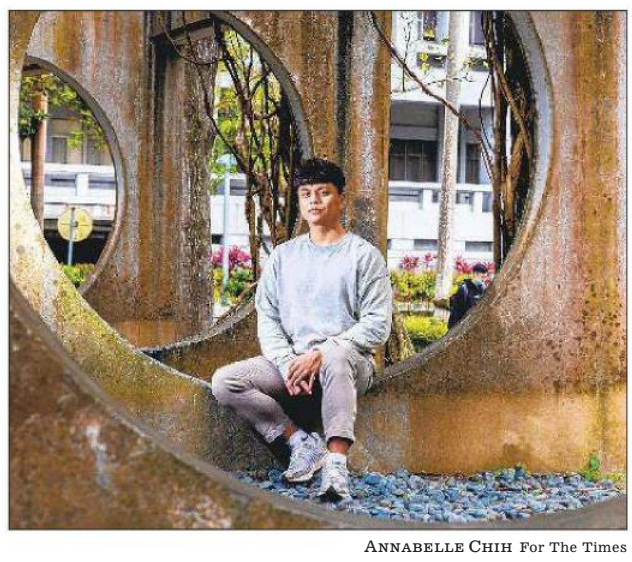
GENE WANG Getty Images

IN 2019, Giljegiljaw Kungkuan officially changed his name in part because he wanted "GILJEGILJAW" emblazoned on his Cleveland MLB franchise jersey.

Even though Taiwan's Indigenous people account for a fraction of the population, many Han Chinese have also embraced Indigenous artists, music and traditions, in part to counter Beijing's claim that the 1.4 billion people on the mainland and the 23 million people of Taiwan belong to one ethnic family. In last year's annual identity survey by the National Chengchi University in Taiwan, only 2.7% of respondents said they considered themselves to be Chinese. About 61% identified as solely Taiwanese, while 33% said they were both Chinese and Taiwanese.

Under Tsai, who is one quarter Paiwan, the government has promoted Indigenous culture and classified all languages used by local ethnic groups as national languages. A five-year plan to advance national languages starting last year includes standardizing writing systems for Indigenous languages and bolstering educational resources.

Kolas Yotaka, spokesperson for the presidential office and a member of Taiwan's Amis tribe, said her decision to use her Indigenous name is often the subject of political attacks, particularly from opponents of the island's ruling Democratic Progressive Party, which has a chillier relationship with Beijing.



ANNABELLE CHIH For The Times

LJEGAY Qeludu says switching to his Indigenous name was worth the minor headaches it has caused.

After she became a DPP legislator in 2016, Kolas said the name on her Wikipedia page was constantly revised to her old Han name, Yeh Kuan-lin, even as her assistant monitored the computer, at war with anonymous editors. During that time, Kolas also proposed an amendment to allow ID names to be written with only Latin letters, which opponents criticized as an attack on Chinese identity and culture.

The 49-year-old former journalist started going by her Amis name in 2006. Kolas was her grandmother's name, which means to separate the wheat from the chaff in her native language. Her Han name has little meaning to her and was derived from the Japanese surname her Amis grandfather used under Japan's occupation.

In her run for Hualien county governor last year, Kolas said, supporters worried that her Indigenous name might deter political donations, if Taiwanese people couldn't read or write it. Some encouraged her, unsuccessfully, to use a Chinese name on campaign posters for broader recognition.

Despite such hurdles, Kolas believes younger generations have become more accepting of cultural differences. While she's often maligned for using an Indigenous name, she said people have also reached out in texts or in Facebook messages to her to share small triumphs in going by their own native names.

"It's become the mini-revolution of my life," she said.

As for Giljegiljaw, a member of the Paiwan tribe, his teammates in Cleveland found his name difficult to pronounce and took to calling him "Gilly." He didn't mind.

COVID-19 cut short his major league aspirations with the Cleveland franchise, which has since undergone its own name change, from the Indians to the Guardians, to salve criticism that its logo could be viewed as racially offensive.

Giljegiljaw now plays in the Chinese Professional Baseball League for Chinese Taipei — the designation that Taiwan's international sports teams and other organizations use since the island is not officially recognized as an independent state.

In March, he played in the World Baseball Classic tournament in his hometown of Taichung, wearing his Indigenous name on his jersey like he did in the U.S. However, most of the time his uniform still sports the Chinese transliteration, and Chinese-speaking broadcasters announce him using tonal Mandarin and soft Gs, rather than the hard Gs of the Indigenous tongue.

To his father, Kuljelju Kungkuan, it sounds like the name of a stranger. He's reached out to a sports broadcaster and a local legislator to request that it be pronounced in his native language. If the player has to be referred to in Chinese, his father prefers the Han name, which he chose in honor of a Taichung general.

Kuljelju, who still legally uses his Han Chinese name Chu Hsin-de, said he was initially concerned about his son going through hardships from changing his name. Now Giljegiljaw's family sends him messages of encouragement, calling him by his childhood nickname, Giyaw, and telling him to keep up the good work.

"If I can reach people through playing baseball, and let people know who we are, then maybe there will be more school kids who will think: I also want to use my Indigenous name," Giljegiljaw said. "I think this would be a huge honor."

Yang is a Times staff writer and Shen a special correspondent.

Russia war losses heavy, U.S. says

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The White House said Monday that it now estimates that since December, Russia has suffered 100,000 casualties, including more than 20,000 killed, as Ukraine has rebuffed a heavy assault by Russian forces in eastern Ukraine.

In what has become a grinding war of attrition, the fiercest battles have been in the eastern Donetsk region, where Russia is struggling to encircle the city of Bakhmut in the face of a dogged Ukrainian defense.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. estimate is based on newly declassified American intelligence.

He did not detail how the intelligence community derived the number.

Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in November that Russia had suffered well over 100,000 killed or wounded in the first eight months of the war.

The new figures suggest that Russian losses have dramatically accelerated in recent months.

Troops from Russia's Wagner mercenary group and other forces are fighting Ukrainian troops house-to-house to try to gain control of what has become known as the "road of life" — the last remaining road west still in Ukrainian hands, making it crucial for supplies and fresh troops. Both sides have cited gains in recent days.

Kirby said nearly half those killed since December are Wagner forces, many of them convicts who were released from prison to join Russia's fight. He said the Wagner forces were "thrown into combat and without sufficient combat or combat training, combat leadership, or any sense of organizational command and control."

The White House has repeatedly sought to highlight the cost — both human and weaponry — to Russia of Bakhmut, which it argues has limited strategic importance to the overall trajectory of the war.

Some analysts, however, note that taking control Bakhmut could be helpful to Russian efforts to advance on the larger cities of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk in the Donetsk region.

Kirby said the Russian casualty count for "this little town of Bakhmut" was in line with the toll in some of the fiercest periods of fighting during World War II, including the Battle of the Bulge, the last major German offensive campaign on the Western Front, and the Guadalcanal campaign, the first major Allied offensive against Japan.

"It's three times the number of killed in action that the United States faced on the Guadalcanal campaign in World War II and that was over the course of five months," Kirby said.

Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the head of Ukrainian ground forces, said that Russia continued to exert "maximum effort" to take Bakhmut but that it so far has failed.

"In some parts of the city, the enemy was counterattacked by our units and left some positions," he said.

Kirby declined to say how many Ukrainian troops have been killed or wounded in the fighting.

Milley said in November that Ukrainian casualties were probably also about 100,000.

Official faces trial after Mexico fire

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY — A judge ordered the head of Mexico's immigration agency to stand trial on charges that he failed in his responsibility to protect those in his custody when 40 migrants died in March in a fire at a border detention center.

Francisco Garduño will remain free during the proceedings and will continue in his job. His lawyer, Rodolfo Pérez, told the Associated Press they will try to reach an agreement for reparations to the victims in order to avoid a trial.

"I will keep working ... until ordered otherwise," Garduño told media late Sunday as he left the court in the border town of Ciudad Juarez.

Federal prosecutors said that he was responsible for the safety of the country's immigration facilities and that there was evidence he knew that Ciudad Juarez's detention center lacked basic safety measures but did nothing to change it.

The judge denied the prosecutors' request that Garduño be removed from his position. He will have to present himself to the court every two weeks.

Garduño's defense team said a private firm, not government officials, was responsible for security at the facility.

A migrant allegedly started a fire March 27 inside the Ciudad Juarez detention center. Security cameras inside the facility showed smoke quickly filling the cell holding 68 male migrants; nobody with keys attempted to rescue them. In addition to the 40 killed, more than two dozen were injured in the fire.

Garduño hasn't stepped down, and President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has voiced his support. The president appointed Garduño to run the agency in 2019 while under pressure from then-President Trump to take a more aggressive stance against migrants crossing Mexico. Garduño was previously in charge of Mexico's prisons.

Seven other immigration officials are standing trial, including one who faces the same charges as Garduño. The others, including a retired military official who was the immigration agency's delegate in Chihuahua state, where Ciudad Juarez is located, were charged with homicide and causing injury by omission.

How to contact us

(800) LA TIMES

Home Delivery and Membership Program
For questions about delivery, billing and vacation holds, or for information about our Membership program, please contact us at (213) 283-2274 or membershipservices@latimes.com. You can also manage your account at myaccount.latimes.com.

Letters to the Editor
Want to write a letter to be published in the paper and online? E-mail letters@latimes.com. For submission guidelines, see latimes.com/letters.

Readers' Representative
If you believe we have made an error, or you have questions about our journalistic standards and practices, our readers' representative can be reached at readers.representative@latimes.com, (877) 554-4000 or online at latimes.com/readersrep.

Advertising
For print and online advertising information, go to latimes.com/mediakit or call (213) 237-6176.

Reprint Requests
For the rights to use articles, photos, graphics and page reproductions, e-mail reprint@latimes.com or call (213) 237-4565.

Times In Education
To get the digital Los Angeles Times at no cost (along with our newspaper–based teaching materials), contact us at latimes.com/tie, or email Heidi.stauder@latimes.com

The Newsroom
Know something important we should cover? Send a secure tip at latimes.com/tips. To send a press release go to the newsroom directory at latimes.com/staff.

Media Relations
For outside media requests and inquiries, e-mail commsdept@latimes.com.

L.A. Times Store
Search archives, merchandise and front pages at latimes.com/store.

Los Angeles Times
A California Times Publication
Founded Dec. 4, 1881
Vol. CXLII No. 150

LOS ANGELES TIMES
(ISSN 0458-3035)
is published by the Los Angeles Times, 2300 E. Imperial Highway, El Segundo, CA 90245. Periodicals postage is paid at Los Angeles, CA, and additional cities. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the above address.

Home Delivery Subscription Rates (all rates include applicable CA sales taxes and apply to most areas)

Print + unlimited digital rates: Seven-day $28/week, $1,456 annually. Thursday–Sunday $16/week, $832 annually. Thursday & Sunday $10/week, $520 annually. Saturday & Sunday $9/week, $468 annually. Sunday $8.50/week, $442 annually. Monday–Saturday $18/week, $936 annually (also includes Sundays, except 2/19, 4/9, 9/3, and 10/8). Monday–Friday $16/week, $832 annually.

All subscriptions may include up to eight Premium issues per year. For each Premium issue, your account balance will be charged an additional fee up to $4.49, in the billing period when the section publishes. This will result in shortening the length of your billing period. Future Premium issues may include: New LA Times Food 1/8/23, Festival of Books 4/16/23, 101 California Best 5/21/23, Ultimate Consumer Guide to Streaming 6/18/23, Boiling Point 8/6/23, De Los Latino 10/1/23, Holiday Gift Guide 11/19/23, 101 Best Restaurants 12/10/23. Dates and titles are subject to change without notice. Subscriptions with a Thurs. delivery, include 24 special issues of The Envelope via USPS with 2 issues in Jan., 5 in Feb., 2 in May, 4 in June, 3 in Aug., 1 in Oct., 3 in Nov. and 5 in Dec.

Printed with soy-based ink on recycled newsprint from wood byproducts.

Yellen says U.S. could hit the debt ceiling on June 1

Treasury secretary warns Congress of risk of default if borrowing authority isn't soon raised or suspended.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MANUEL BALCE CENETA Associated Press

TREASURY Secretary Janet L. Yellen said it is impossible to predict when the U.S. may run out of cash.

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen notified Congress on Monday that the U.S. could default on its debt as early as June 1, if legislators do not raise or suspend the nation's borrowing authority before then and avert what could potentially become a global financial crisis.

In a letter to House and Senate leaders, Yellen urged Congress "to protect the full faith and credit of the United States by acting as soon as possible" to address the $31.4-trillion limit on its legal borrowing authority. She added that it is impossible to predict with certainty the exact date when the U.S. will run out of cash.

"We have learned from past debt limit impasses that waiting until the last minute to suspend or increase the debt limit can cause serious harm to business and consumer confidence, raise short-term borrowing costs for taxpayers, and negatively impact the credit rating of the United States," she said in the letter.

Also Monday, the Congressional Budget Office reported that it saw a greater risk of the U.S. running out of funds in early June. CBO Director Phillip L. Swagel said because of less-than-expected tax receipts this filing season and a faster IRS having processed already received returns, "Treasury's extraordinary measures will be exhausted sooner than we previously projected."

In January, Yellen sent a letter to congressional leaders, stating that her department had begun resorting to "extraordinary measures" to avoid a federal government default.

The Treasury said Monday that it plans to increase its borrowing during the April-to-June quarter of this year, even as the federal government is close to breaching the debt limit.

The U.S. plans to borrow $726 billion during the quarter. That's $449 billion more than projected in January, due to a lower beginning-of-quarter cash balance and projections of lower-than-expected income tax receipts and higher spending.

While Russia's invasion of Ukraine remains a burden on U.S. economic growth, Treasury officials say the debate over the debt ceiling poses the greatest risk to the U.S. financial position.

Eric Van Nostrand, acting assistant secretary for economic policy, said in a statement that "even if Congress ultimately raises the debt limit before a default occurs, the ensuing uncertainty could raise borrowing costs and induce other financial stress that would weaken our labor market and our standing in the world."

"There is no time to waste," said Shai Akabas, director of economic policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, which forecasts the so-called X-date when the government exhausts its extraordinary measures. His organization will also provide an updated X-date projection in the coming days, he said.

"The U.S. government is again within mere months or even weeks of failing to make good on all its obligations," he said. "That is not a position befitting of a country considered the bedrock of the financial system, and only adds uncertainty to an already shaky economy."

Democrats and the White House are pushing for Congress to increase the federal debt limit. President Biden wants the cap raised without negotiation.

The House Republican majority has most recently passed a bill to secure spending cuts in exchange for a debt limit increase. Biden on Monday invited the four congressional leaders to the White House on May 9 to discuss the matter.

Yellen said last week, at the Cap-to-Cap policy conference in Washington, that "Congress must vote to raise or suspend the debt limit, and it should do so without conditions and it should not wait until the last minute. I believe that is a basic responsibility of our nation's leaders to get this done."

Montana trans lawmaker files suit

Zephyr says her removal from House floor by GOP denies constituents' right to representation.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HELENA, Mont. — Montana state Rep. Zooey Zephyr asked a court to allow for her return to the House floor after she was silenced and barred for chiding Republican colleagues over legislation to restrict gender-affirming healthcare and for encouraging protesters.

Attorneys for the first-term lawmaker sued in state district court in Helena on behalf of Zephyr, a transgender Democrat who represents a liberal district in the college town of Missoula, and several constituents who the attorneys said were being denied their right to adequate representation.

Zephyr, whose comments in the Montana Legislature have made her a prominent figure in transgender rights and in conversations about the muffling of dissent in statehouses, said in a statement Monday that she and her constituents were targeted "because I dared to give voice to the values and needs of transgender people like myself."

The legal challenge against House Speaker Matt Regier and statehouse Sergeant-at-Arms Bradley Murfitt comes with just days left in the Legislature's biennial session.

A spokesperson for Montana Atty. Gen. Austin Knudsen — a Republican whose office will defend the case — said the lawsuit is frivolous.

"This is performance litigation — political activism masquerading as a lawsuit," said Emily Flower, Knudsen's press secretary. She added that a court decision blocking the Legislature's censure of Zephyr would violate the separation of powers between branches of government.

Murfitt said he would not comment on the lawsuit, and Regier did not respond to messages seeking comment.

GOP leaders, under pressure from hard-line conservatives, two weeks ago silenced Zephyr from participating in floor debates and demanded that she apologize, after she said those who support a ban on gender-affirming care for youths would have blood on their hands.

Hospitals broke the law in nixing abortion, U.S. says

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Two hospitals that refused to provide an emergency abortion to a pregnant woman who was experiencing premature labor put her life in jeopardy and violated federal law, a first-of-its-kind investigation by the federal government has found.

The findings, revealed in documents obtained by the Associated Press, are a warning to hospitals as they struggle to reconcile dozens of new state laws that ban or severely restrict abortion with a federal mandate for doctors to provide abortions when a woman's health is at risk. The competing edicts have been rolled out since the Supreme Court last year overturned the constitutional right to an abortion.

Federal law, which requires doctors to treat patients in emergency situations, trumps the state laws, Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a statement.

"Fortunately, this patient survived. But she never should have gone through the terrifying ordeal she experienced in the first place," Becerra said.

The investigation centered on two hospitals — in Joplin, Mo., and Kansas City, Kan. — that in August refused to provide an abortion to a Missouri woman whose water broke at 17 weeks of pregnancy.

Doctors at both hospitals told Mylissa Farmer that her fetus would not survive and that she was at risk of serious infection or losing her uterus, but they would not terminate the pregnancy because a fetal heartbeat was detectable.

Farmer, of Joplin, had to travel to an abortion clinic in Illinois.

"It was dehumanizing. It was terrifying. It was horrible not to get the care to save your life," Farmer said.

Her complaints launched the first investigations that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has publicly acknowledged since Roe vs. Wade was overturned last year.

FORE
TOLD
A NEW PODCAST
CAN A FORTUNETELLER CHANGE HER FUTURE?
"Foretold" is a new podcast from the L.A. Times, exploring the insular and sometimes misunderstood Romani community. In this series, Times reporter Faith Pinho is joined by Romani American fortuneteller Paulina Stevens for a unique perspective on life in a culture that outsiders rarely get to see.
Scan the code to listen and follow, or visit latimes.com/foretold
Listen on Apple Podcasts
LISTEN ON Spotify
Los Angeles Times

After 18 years in prison, he turned on his old gang

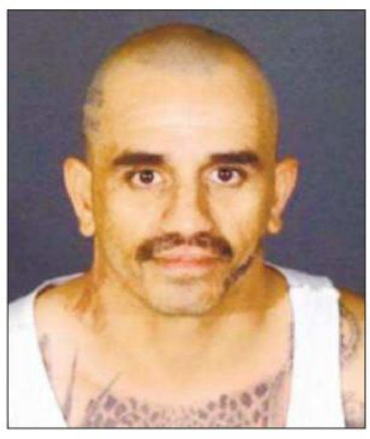
[**Romo,** from A1]
calls, it was his turn to go.

And if you had something Romo wanted, like a kilogram of cocaine, why pay for it? His dealer got the same treatment: a bullet in the back.

"Why would you kill your own gang members?" Deputy Dist. Atty. Eric Siddall asked in his closing argument. "Because in Romo's world, if you don't fit the mold, if you don't do what he wants, you get killed."

LUIS SINCO Los Angeles Times

FOUR MEMBERS OF the Blythe Street gang in Panorama City are on trial on charges of conspiracy and murder. Officials say one killing took place at the intersection of Blythe and Van Nuys Boulevard, pictured last month, on the orders of leader Ezequiel Romo.



Los Angeles Superior Court

ISIDRO ALBA, 38, was set up and slain in Van Nuys in 2017.

Los Angeles Superior Court

CARLOS RIOS, 21, was fatally shot from behind Oct. 28, 2017.

Blythe Street takes its name from a few blocks between Van Nuys Boulevard and Brimfield Avenue in Panorama City. Successions of police task forces and anti-gang programs have never managed to shake its reputation as a drug market or weaken the gang's pull on generations of children who grow up in the apartment complexes that crowd one another behind tall metal fences.

Members of Blythe Street tend to use the same word to describe the gang: "You feel like it's family," a former gang member told The Times, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

Some were 12 or 13 when they joined, their parents absent or uninterested in their lives. They'd spend their days finding "ways to survive," the gang member said. "Nobody has a job. Nobody has monthly income. So you're robbing people, jacking cars, selling drugs."

On any night, you'd catch them hanging out in apartment complexes with names such as the Casitas, the Pinks and Green Village. They'd lock themselves inside the laundry rooms to smoke methamphetamine, squat in vacant apartments, sell drugs in the parking lots.

If a carload of rivals from gangs such as Columbus Street or Barrio Van Nuys pulled up, members of Blythe Street vanished into the warren of hallways and stairwells. The night air crackled with the anticipation that gunfire might erupt from any oncoming car.

This was Romo's domain: the street, the gang, the money to be wrung from the pushers and dispensaries and gambling parlors that operated within the gang's territory.

"All I ask for is complete control of Panorama City," he wrote in 2017 in a WhatsApp message from prison to an underling on the streets.

Five feet 11 and well-built, Romo wore glasses and a rumpled charcoal suit in the courtroom. The collars of his dress shirts could not entirely hide the hummingbird and butterfly tattooed on either side of his neck.

Unlike his three younger codefendants, who seemed by turns bored and mildly amused by the proceedings, Romo watched the testimony intently, taking notes on a legal pad and whispering often in his lawyer's ear.

Romo, whose parents divorced when he was 4, was raised mostly by his paternal grandparents in San Fernando, according to court documents. As a teenager, he supported his grandparents by working for his uncles, who owned a construction business and machine shop.

Romo was 18 when he got into a fight with another teenager, Manuel Avila, at a Tommy's hamburger stand on Roscoe Boulevard. After Avila punched him in the face, Romo shot the 19-year-old in front of a crowd of diners, The Times reported. It was 1995.

"He was just beginning his life," Avila's sister told the judge before Romo was sentenced in 1996 for manslaughter, according to a transcript of the hearing. "He was doing so good in school. He had so many goals and everything in life. His life just stopped there."

She urged the judge to imprison Romo for as long as the law allowed.

"He's going to be hurting our community," she said.

But Romo's lawyer, producing letters from his client's family, neighbors and a former teacher, pleaded with the judge not to write the young man off. "I think that he's worth saving, judge. That's all I can say."

Sentenced to 10 years for the manslaughter, Romo would do 18 after being convicted in 2007 of assaulting another inmate, records show.

When he got out in late 2014, Romo met with another veteran of Blythe Street, who testified at his trial in hopes of reducing a sentence for drug trafficking. The man, identified in the court record as Witness 1 for his safety, said Romo told him "his whole agenda, what he was representing."

In prison, Romo had worked under the Mexican Mafia. Blythe Street never had much to do with the group, whose members were locked up in distant penitentiaries, Witness 1 said. The extent of their involvement was paying "taxes," a few hundred dollars a month, which Blythe Street came up with by extorting Mexican nationals who sold crack and heroin in Panorama City.

"When I was a kid, it was about neighborhood. It was about Blythe Street. We didn't have much to do with politics," Witness 1 said, referring to the Mexican Mafia.

Romo envisioned something different, Witness 1 said. The Mexican Mafia needed feet on the ground to realize schemes hatched from prison. Working for three Mexican Mafia members — Frank "Playboy" Fernandez, Raul "Huero Smooth" Garcia and Jose "Cartune" Loza — Blythe Street collected debts, moved drugs and muscled those who needed persuading, Witness 1 testified.

"His thing was making things right for them people. Doing favors for them. Taking care of people in the county [jail]. It sounded good," Witness 1 testified, "but a lot of violence came after."

First, Romo needed to get his own house in order. He intended to purge the gang of "dirty homeboys" — informants, addicts and dissenters, Witness 1 said.

Blythe Street members started turning up dead around 2015. Rumors flew that they had not been killed by rivals, said the gang member who spoke to The Times. No one went looking for revenge or tattooed the names of the dead on their bodies. The funerals — and the carwashes put on to fund them — were sparsely attended.

"I should have seen it was a red flag," the gang member said.

In a gray apartment complex off Blythe Street, a dealer called Chaparro — Shorty — rented three units: one for his family, one for a girlfriend and one "where he cooked his dope," Witness 1 testified. Chaparro paid Romo every month for the privilege of selling in the gang's territory, he said.

After a drug bust, Chaparro fled to Mexico. Romo arranged to buy a kilogram of cocaine from Chaparro's supplier, a Mexican national whom Witness 1 knew only as "the *paisa*." His name was Felipe Delgado.

Romo took the cocaine, promising to return with the money in a week, Witness 1 testified. Then Romo started spreading word that Delgado was an informant, according to Witness 1, who doubted the story. Romo "wanted to kill him because supposedly he was a rat, but at the same time he had taken a kilo of cocaine. And he had kept that money. He had no intention of paying."

Because Romo was on parole, he had a GPS monitor on his ankle. So he and Witness 1 arranged for a young member of Blythe Street, Steven "Youngster" Mendoza, to murder Delgado. The plan was for Romo to meet Delgado behind Chaparro's apartment complex. Romo would announce that he was getting the money. Mendoza would wait until Romo had walked out of sight before stepping out from behind a car and shooting Delgado.

Romo believed his GPS monitor would show that he was in front of the building while Delgado was killed behind it, giving him an alibi, Witness 1 testified. To establish one of his own, Witness 1 went to his son's football game at Panorama High School.

At 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 6, 2015, Delgado was shot three times in the back behind Chaparro's apartment complex. Witness 1 saw the police helicopter fly over the football stadium. He knew where it was headed.

Mendoza was charged in the same case as Romo but has yet to go to trial. Mendoza has pleaded not guilty to murdering Delgado.

Two months after Delgado's death, Romo was arrested with half a kilogram of methamphetamine in his car, court records show. He pleaded guilty and was shipped off to the Imperial County desert to serve a four-year term at Centinela State Prison, which would become the "corporate headquarters" for Blythe Street, said Siddall, the deputy district attorney.

There, Romo had access to cellphones smuggled in by prison staff or dropped inside the walls using drones, testified Sgt. Craig Parkhill, an investigator at Centinela.

Witness 1 said he kept Romo updated on the neighborhood, including the matter of Isidro "Topo" Alba.

Once a leader of Blythe Street, Alba, 38, was by then living out of his car, scratching out a living by peddling methamphetamine and shaking down other dealers. He said he was collecting the money on behalf of Mexican Mafia members in federal prison, but Witness 1 doubted it — especially when it emerged that one of the men Alba claimed to be working for was dead.

Romo had warned Alba to stay out of Panorama City, but after he returned to prison, Witness 1 got word that Alba was coming around again. A liquor store owner was complaining of being extorted.

Romo told Witness 1 to let Alba know there was a way to redeem himself: Loza, one of the Mexican Mafia members aligned with Romo, was facing trial on charges of gunning down another member, Dominick "Solo" Gonzalez. Alba had claimed to work for Gonzalez.

To bolster Loza's claim of self-defense, Romo wanted Alba to testify that Gonzalez was violent, Witness 1 said. He recalled that Alba refused to "jump in the hot chair," saying, "That sounds more like telling."

The night of Aug. 27, 2017, Alba was waiting outside a Target in Van Nuys for a customer who wanted to trade a phone for methamphetamine. Sitting beside him in his Dodge Avenger, Alba's girlfriend — whom The Times is not naming, for her safety — noticed a black sedan drive past several times.

Alba hesitated. "Do you think this is a setup?" he asked.

"Just hurry the f— up," she told him, handing him the drugs from the glove box.

Alba got out. The next thing she heard were shots. She saw Alba running back to the car, chased by two men in hooded sweatshirts. She identified them as Juan "Flaco" Ramirez and Yordin "Little Goofy" Enere, both members of Blythe Street.

Ramirez, whom she had known for years, was standing outside her window when he opened fire at point-blank range, she testified.

When the gunfire stopped and the shooters had fled, she ran into the street, raising both hands to flag down an oncoming car, according to a video played in court. Too late, she recognized the black sedan.

Ramirez and Enere stepped out, along with a third man, and shot at her again, she testified. She ran back to the car, lay down in the seat and played dead.

When police arrived, they found her bleeding from the shattered glass of her window. Somehow, none of the seven bullets fired through it had hit her.

Alba was dead. He never had a chance to grab the .38 from the glove box.

Enere and Ramirez have pleaded not guilty to murdering Alba and attempting to murder his girlfriend. They have yet to go to trial.

Another man was in the black sedan that night. His name was Oscar Molina.

After Romo returned to prison, Molina, a stocky Blythe Street veteran nicknamed Smoky, became his right-hand man.

"U need feet out here," Molina wrote to Romo on WhatsApp. "Can't bee in two places at once if not u probably would."

Hundreds of messages exchanged between the two men illustrate their relationship: Romo the demanding boss, Molina the fawning middle manager.

On Christmas Eve 2017, Molina typed out a long message: "Don't let nothing change u Bee. Ure one of the few that I consider a good homie a good *camarada* so with that said just know ure boy will always Bee loyal & will always have ure back as long as I am around."

"*Gracias* for ur words," Romo wrote back. "They r a gift I accept more than money or shiny objects."

The crimes that Romo and Molina discussed span the state's penal code. Collecting money from gambling parlors. Extorting dispensaries. Buying weapons at gun shows with fake IDs. Obtaining drugs in Mexico and trafficking them out of state. Killing an informant within Blythe Street.

The messages reveal Romo's view of his gang ("an empire"), himself ("a general") and his management style ("some say I'm too hands on").

Among the witnesses at Romo's trial was a man who considered Molina an uncle, even if they weren't related by blood. Identified in the court record as Witness 2, he was the beneficiary of a remarkably lenient deal: six years in custody for two murders, four years of which he will be allowed to serve under house arrest.

Witness 2 testified that he and Molina spoke with Romo over FaceTime almost every day, huddling in the bathroom of Molina's apartment. During one meeting, Molina told Romo that Carlos Rios, a Blythe Street hanger-on, had gotten a gang tattoo without being "jumped in" (inducted through a beating).

"Nobody can have a 'B' on his face without earning it," Romo said, according to Witness 2. "This is not a game." He told Molina to "take care of" Rios, Witness 2 testified, although he acknowledged that Romo did not explicitly say to kill him.

Rios had grown up in the gang's territory and attended Panorama High School until the 11th grade, when he was caught stealing a skateboard and sent to a youth camp, said his sister, who declined to be named. She described Rios as a quiet kid, "very private," who kept his family and friends separate.

She recalled the day her brother came home after doing a 10-month stretch in county jail with a "B" tattooed on his left cheek.

"I was very upset," she said. Even before he went to jail he'd been claiming to be part of the gang. She doubted it.

That was a Wednesday. By Sunday morning he was dead.

The jury heard the following account of his death from Witness 2 and one of the shooters, Santos "Raider" Martinez, then 18, who bragged to his cellmate in a recorded sting.

Romo was mad that Panorama City was "hot" — had drawn the attention of the police — so Molina, Martinez and his brother, Neftaly Martinez, drove Rios to Van Nuys, telling him they were going to graffiti a rival neighborhood. Rios started spray-painting "BST, Panorama City, Blythe Street," Santos Martinez told his cellmate. "I tell him keep on tagging. While he's tagging, I dome the idiot."

But Rios was alive, even though Santos Martinez had emptied his gun's magazine into the 21-year-old. So Neftaly Martinez got out of the car, Witness 2 testified, and finished him off.

Prosecutors also charged Romo in the murders of three people killed in the long-running feud between the Blythe Street and Columbus Street gangs, arguing that their deaths ensured he retained control of Panorama City's drug trade.

The night of Nov. 17, 2017, Alexis Saldana, 18, pulled onto Blythe Street with three other members of Columbus Street in his car, yelling "F— burros," Santos Martinez told his cellmate. Burro is a derogatory term for Blythe Street.

Santos Martinez said he chased them to a Wendy's, where he "took this fool out." Shot in the back of the head, Saldana stepped on the gas and crashed into the restaurant.

A month later, James "Smiley" Rodriguez, a Columbus Street member whom Molina had warned to stay out of Panorama City, was shot to death outside a Denny's where Witness 2's wife waited tables.

She testified that after the shooting, Santos Martinez told her that a "*pobre pendejo*" — a poor bastard — had been killed too.

Elvis Sanchez had been sitting next to Rodriguez on a bus bench when the shooting started. The 31-year-old deliveryman, who had nothing to do with gangs, died on the sidewalk.

"2 more calabazas down," Molina wrote to Romo the next day, using an insulting term for Columbus Street. "Everything worked out perfecto once again. And smiley was one of them."

"Good to know..." Romo wrote. "Gracias b safe!!!"

According to Witness 2, Molina had taken part in five murders. He'd collected Romo's money and carried out his orders, putting the gang above all else.

"For him, it was his hood, God,

[See **Romo,** A7]

[**Romo,** from A6]
then family," Witness 2 said.

His reward was four bullets in the back.

Romo would berate Molina for not returning his calls. "Don't worry about me u stopped answering me I'm cool won't bother u no more!!!" he once told Molina, who responded with a long apology. He was tired of them arguing over "simple stuff," Molina wrote. "It seems like u find the reason to go off on me and I know u do it for my good but u know sometimes I'm not having a good day."

Molina was addicted to heroin and methamphetamine, Witness 2 said. Sometimes he'd shoot up while he was on FaceTime with Romo.

"There is only 24 hours in a day. Money never sleeps," an irritated Romo told Molina after several missed calls. He said he assumed Molina had "too much Halloween candy" — drugs.

Around 4 a.m. on Feb. 10, 2018, Molina told a woman in his apartment he would be right back, a coroner's report says. He tucked a revolver in his waistband, stepped out and was shot in the doorway by his longtime friend, Eder Mendoza, prosecutors charge. Another Blythe Street member, Lorenzo Gonzalez, allegedly acted as lookout.

Witness 2 testified that Romo told him Molina was killed because he'd owed people money, he'd been caught lying, and he "was getting way, way too high."

Twelve days later, Mendoza and Gonzalez picked up Karen Tobar, 23, in an unlicensed taxi called a "bandit cab," prosecutors say. Tobar had been in Molina's apartment the night he was killed. Her body was found in a Sylmar park the next morning, stabbed 60 times.

Mendoza and Gonzalez believed she'd talked to the police about Molina's death, prosecutors allege. Both men have pleaded not guilty to charges of murdering Molina and Tobar.

In his closing argument in a ninth-floor courtroom of the downtown Criminal Courts Building, Romo's attorney, Jerome Haig, said the prosecution's witnesses were lying when they cast him as "the big leader of this gang, who micromanages everyone."

From the start of their investigation, he argued, the police wanted to tie every gang killing in Panorama City to Romo, no matter how thin the evidence.

Jurors did not buy it. After deliberating for nine days, they not only convicted Romo of the murders he was alleged to have ordered but also found him liable for the killings of Columbus Street members. He faces life in prison without parole.

After the verdict, Haig took the view that Romo "was trying to make the gang more powerful as an enterprise, not as far as killing people." He noted that Romo's messages with Molina discuss selling drugs, acquiring guns and making money — but none of the murders he was said to have ordered. Making that argument to the jury, though, was "a difficult needle to thread."

Los Angeles Superior Court

ALBA'S GIRLFRIEND was not hit by any of the rounds fired at her. She feigned death to survive.

"I tried to make the jury think, and think hard, about their obligations," Haig said. "And I think they did, even if they didn't come back our way."

Santos Martinez, who fell asleep as his attorney pleaded with the jury to acquit him, was convicted of four murders.

The panel found his brother guilty of murdering Rios; while Neftaly Martinez was acquitted of Saldana's murder, he was found guilty of conspiring to commit the crime.

William "Smokes" Benitez, who "looked like" the third participant in Alba's shooting, according to Alba's girlfriend, was acquitted of that murder. The jury hung — 9 to 3 in favor of acquittal — on the charge that Benitez, along with Santos Martinez, murdered Rodriguez and Sanchez outside the Denny's, said his lawyer, Joel Koury.

Benitez was nonetheless convicted of conspiring to commit those murders, meaning he faces 50 years to life in prison, Koury said.

"The way the law is written," Koury said, "there's no limit to liability. Because he's a gang member, he's responsible for everything the gang does."

Koury said that in casting so broad a net, the state's gang conspiracy law fails to consider that people join gangs for different reasons and get involved to varying degrees.

"Since the jury rejected that he was a shooter, what was William Benitez's role in the conspiracy? He got high with the gang," Koury said.

It was never made clear during the trial whether Romo got what he wanted. While Haig said he has "no status" in the Mexican Mafia, the word on the street is that Romo is now a "*señor*," a term of respect for a Mexican Mafia member.

On a recent evening, Blythe Street was quiet. So many of its members are in jail or dead.

Perhaps Romo said it best when he texted Molina, six weeks before he was murdered: "U can judge a real mans worth by the success of those around him."

Trump accuser says she's part of 'silent generation'

E. Jean Carroll tells a federal jury why she didn't go to police with rape claims.

By Larry Neumeister and Jennifer Peltz

John Minchillo Associated Press

E. JEAN CARROLL, 79, arrives at federal court in Manhattan on Monday. She testified that the fact that she didn't go to police with claims that Donald Trump raped her is "not surprising for somebody my age."

NEW YORK — A magazine columnist who says Donald Trump raped her in a department-store dressing room two decades before he became president acknowledged Monday that she did not follow her own advice to readers that they report sexual attacks to police.

E. Jean Carroll, 79, told a federal civil court jury that as a member of the "silent generation," she was conditioned to keep her chin up and not complain.

"The fact that I never went to the police is not surprising for somebody my age," she testified when Trump lawyer Joe Tacopina asked why she never went to authorities about the alleged rape, which Trump denies. Carroll said she had called police only once in her life, when she thought a mailbox at a home where she was staying might be damaged on Halloween.

"You would call police if a mailbox was attacked," Tacopina asked, "but not if you yourself were attacked?"

Carroll replied that she was ashamed of the alleged rape at the time. She later added that she was mindful of Trump's power and connections in New York and "didn't think police would take me seriously."

Rapes and sexual assaults are among the types of violent crime least likely to be reported to police, researchers have found. A U.S. crime victimization survey found that less than 23% of rapes and sexual assaults were reported in 2021 and 2020, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Carroll on Monday wrapped up three days of testimony in the trial stemming from her lawsuit against Trump. The trial is due to continue Tuesday with witnesses on her behalf.

Trump, who traveled to Scotland on Monday to open a golf course at his resort near Aberdeen, has not attended the trial.

Jurors are expected to see sections of a recording of him answering questions last fall under oath.

Carroll has said the real estate magnate raped her in the spring of 1996 at the tony store Bergdorf Goodman after they went into a dressing room together in an encounter she said was fun and flirtatious until Trump became violent. She said she eventually kneed him and fled.

Trump, 76, says he was never at the store with Carroll and didn't know her beyond a fleeting moment in 1987 when they were photographed in a group setting.

Shortly before Carroll first took the stand last week, Trump on his social media platform described the rape accusation as "a fraudulent & false story."

In court Monday, Tacopina brought up a 2012 episode of the TV show "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" in which a male character speaks about acting out a sexual fantasy that involves bursting in on a woman who is trying on lingerie in a Bergdorf Goodman dressing room. Jurors saw an email in which someone mentioned the episode to Carroll after she went public with her claim in 2019.

Carroll testified that she has never seen the episode, didn't know about it before receiving the email and didn't make up an accusation based on a TV show. She said she wasn't surprised at the points of similarity.

"The 'Law & Order' writers are very good about keying into the psyches of their viewers," said Carroll, asserting that many people have misplaced fantasies about rape.

Her testimony came shortly after Tacopina asked Judge Lewis A. Kaplan, who is overseeing the civil proceedings, to declare a mistrial because of rulings he made that Tacopina said favored Carroll. The judge rejected the request.

Carroll sued Trump in November, under a New York state law that gave victims a one-year window to sue over alleged sexual attacks that happened even decades ago.

Amid a flurry of public denials and insults from Trump that prompted Carroll to add a defamation claim to the lawsuit, the former president has insisted that she was motivated by political reasons and a desire to sell copies of her 2019 memoir.

Carroll has testified that she spoke out because of the #MeToo movement, which gained prominence in 2017.

Carroll wrote an advice column for Elle magazine for nearly three decades. Tacopina confronted her Monday with instances in which she advised readers who wrote in about sexual assaults to contact law enforcement.

"I always — in most cases — advised my readers to go to the police," Carroll acknowledged.

Tacopina pointed out that although Carroll's memoir described sexual assaults by men over the course of her life, Trump was the only one she sued. Although Trump has insisted he had no sexual encounter — indeed, "no anything" — with Carroll, his attorney asked her whether what allegedly happened could "somehow be viewed as consensual."

"It was not consensual," she said emphatically.

The Associated Press typically does not name people who say they have been sexually assaulted unless they come forward publicly, as Carroll has done.

Neumeister and Peltz write for the Associated Press.

Judge blocks rule in Missouri limiting transgender care

Order cites possible harm to patients if attorney general's edict goes into effect.

By Summer Ballentine

COLUMBIA, Mo. — A Missouri judge on Monday temporarily blocked a unique rule that would require adults and children to undergo more than a year of therapy and fulfill several other requirements before they could receive gender-affirming treatments such as puberty blockers, hormones and surgery.

St. Louis County Circuit Judge Ellen Ribaudo issued a temporary restraining order blocking enforcement of Republican Atty. Gen. Andrew Bailey's emergency rule until May 15 (unless she extends the order). She also scheduled a May 11 hearing over the lawsuit challenging the rule.

In her ruling, Ribaudo wrote that those who are suing to block the ruling would "be subjected to immediate and irreparable loss, damage or injury if the Attorney General is permitted to enforce the Emergency Rule, and its broad, sweeping provisions were implemented without further fact-finding or evidence."

She wrote that patients "are at high risk of having their medical care interrupted for an unknown length of time; once the Rule goes into effect, they may lose access to medical care through their current providers until such time as the provider can come into compliance with the Rule's requirements."

Bailey's office didn't reply to a request for comment.

Gillian Wilcox, deputy director of litigation for the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri, which filed suit on behalf of transgender Missourians, applauded the ruling.

"Today's ruling marks a win for transgender Missourians over an unprecedented attempt by the Attorney General to unilaterally legislate and harm their right to self-expression, bodily autonomy, and access to lifesaving health care," Wilcox said in a statement.

Legal experts and transgender advocates say that if the lawsuit fails and Bailey's rule takes effect, it would make Missouri the first state to restrict gender-affirming care for adults and the first to enact such restrictions through emergency rulemaking instead of through a new law.

Transgender Missourians argue in the lawsuit that the rule is discriminatory and that Bailey sidestepped the Republican-led Legislature and exceeded his authority by attempting to regulate gender-affirming healthcare through the state's existing consumer-protection law.

Bailey has touted the rule as a way to shield minors from what he describes as experimental medical treatments, though puberty blockers and sex hormones have been prescribed for decades, and the rule would also apply to adults.

The attorney general's office has said there are 12,400 Missourians who identify as transgender, the ruling noted. The office estimated that 600 to 700 Missourians would begin intervention in the next year.

The rule, which was set to take effect last week, would require people to have experienced an "intense pattern" of documented gender dysphoria for three years and to have received at least 15 hourly sessions with a therapist over at least 18 months before they could receive puberty blockers, hormones, surgery or other treatment.

Before receiving such care, patients would also have to be screened for autism, and any psychiatric symptoms from mental health issues would have to be treated and resolved. Minors, but not adults, would also have to be screened for "social media addiction" before treatments could begin. Some people would be able to maintain their prescriptions while undergoing required assessments.

The transgender Missourians and healthcare providers who are suing to block the rule say it is discriminatory and illegal.

Tony Rothert, an attorney for the ACLU, told Ribaudo at a hearing Wednesday that the regulations would "cause immediate, severe and potentially irreparable harm" for people who could lose access to medications.

"We don't allow attorneys general to legislate, and we don't allow them to play doctor," Rothert said.

He and other attorneys said transgender people who can't get gender-affirming care are at higher risk of suicide.

Assistant Atty. Gen. Joshua Divine argued that Bailey's order would not ban gender-affirming care and instead would provide "basic procedural guardrails." He cited studies showing that a high percentage of children who seek to transition are dealing with mental health issues. He said that rather than transitioning, they should undergo "talk therapy."

Bailey issued the restrictions following an investigation he launched in February into the Washington University Transgender Center at St. Louis Children's Hospital. The investigation was prompted by a former employee who alleged that the center was providing children with gender-affirming care without informed consent, a sufficient individualized case review and wrap-around mental health services. A review by the university found no misconduct and determined that the former employee's claims were unsubstantiated.

Some transgender people have been trying to stockpile their prescribed hormones or find alternative ways to get the medications on their own, out of fear they could lose access to the gender-affirming treatments many credit as life-saving. Some are considering leaving Missouri if the emergency rule isn't blocked in court.

"This feels like the end of Kansas City being my home," said Stacy Cay, an autistic transgender woman. "It feels like it's being taken away."

Missouri's Democratic House minority leader, Crystal Quade, said last week that she asked President Biden and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an executive order that would extend coverage for Missourians who seek gender-affirming care in other states. She also asked the Democratic governors of Kansas and Illinois if their healthcare systems would accept Missouri patients for such care.

Bailey's efforts to crack down on gender-affirming healthcare come as Republicans across the country have proposed hundreds of laws aimed at transgender people. At least 13 states have enacted laws restricting or banning gender-affirming care for minors.

Ballentine writes for the Associated Press. AP writer Jim Salter contributed to this report.

BUSINESS

CHANDAN KHANNA AFP/Getty Images

WHY Elon Musk, shown with one of his children last month, settled is known only to him. He did not respond to requests for comment.

Musk settles suit. Unjust or just right?

Plaintiff's lawyer in the defamation case quotes the billionaire's old tweet back at him after winning $10,000.

BY RUSS MITCHELL

A year ago this month, Elon Musk proclaimed his position on guilt and innocence in a tweet.

"My commitment: We will never seek victory in a just case against us, even if we will probably win," he wrote. "We will never surrender/settle an unjust case against us, even if we will probably lose."

Recently, Musk surrendered. Rather than persist in fighting a nearly 3-year-old defamation lawsuit filed by graduate student Randeep Hothi, the pugnacious chief executive of Tesla cried uncle, settling for $10,000. Musk's lawyers offered to settle several weeks ago, and on Monday, Hothi said, he accepted.

Hothi's suit accused Musk of defaming him in an email claiming that Hothi "almost killed" a Tesla security guard in the parking lot of the company's factory, with no basis in fact.

"Last year, Musk famously promised that he would never 'settle an unjust case.' Yet, he has asked Mr. Hothi to accommodate him," D. Gill Sperlein, one of Hothi's lawyers, said in a statement Monday. "We welcome Musk's belated acknowledgment that this case was just."

Musk's lawyer's have yet to respond to emails or phone calls from The Times.

To be sure, the cave-in is unlikely to alter billionaire Musk's jet-set lifestyle. Ten thousand dollars equals 0.000006% of his estimated net worth of $165 billion.

Another way to look at it: If a family's net worth totaled $165,000 (well above the U.S. median) and the settlement percentage was the same, that family would have to write Hothi a check for 1 cent.

Whether Musk settled because he changed his mind and decided that Hothi's was a just case, or for some other reason, only Musk knows. He did not respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit

So who is Randeep Hothi, anyway, and what was the defamation suit about?

The defamation part is simple: Hothi's lawyers argued that when Musk wrote the email in 2019 claiming that Hothi "almost killed" a Tesla security guard, with no evidence to back it up, he defamed Hothi.

The who-is-Hothi part is a bit more complicated: A graduate student at the University of Michigan but living in the Bay Area in early 2019, Hothi began monitoring auto production from outside Tesla's Fremont factory, and posting his findings on Twitter. Using the handle @skabooshka, he was popular with a group of short sellers and other Tesla critics known as #TeslaQ. (At the time, Hothi held a short position in Tesla stock.)

He was unpopular among Tesla executives, particularly Musk. The factory's security force had recorded his license plate number, and guards had orders to kick him out if they saw him nosing around.

Hothi was on a mission. He was skeptical that Musk could pull off promises of manufacturing the new Model 3 in a factory so automated and so devoid of humans it would resemble an "alien dreadnaught."

Hothi turned out to be right — Musk's aggressive automation attempt was an embarrassing flop and Tesla ended up assembling Model 3s in a hastily erected tent outside the factory walls. Tesla stock was under great pressure at the time from short sellers who were betting the company was about to fail. But Musk pulled it off — it may have been built in a tent, but the Model 3 proved popular, and, by Musk's own admission, the company narrowly escaped bankruptcy in 2018 and was still struggling with production when Hothi was ejected from the parking lot.

The trouble started in February 2019, after Hothi pulled his car into the Tesla factory lot and parked. The lot is publicly accessible, and the site included a Tesla retail sales showroom that the public was invited to visit.

A guard intercepted Hothi and told him to leave. Hothi said he was going to the showroom but complied with the order. As Hothi pulled out of the parking lot, the guard was standing near the side of his car. Hothi passed him, closely. What happened physically is unclear, but after Tesla showed video of the encounter to local law enforcement and tried to have Hothi arrested, police and prosecutors told Tesla they found no cause.

The "alien dreadnaught" wasn't the only source of Hothi's skepticism. He regarded Musk's claims that his Autopilot system would soon develop into a "full self-driving" robot car as fantastical. Musk had claimed in 2016 that a Tesla would be able to drive itself with no human intervention from Los Angeles to New York by the end of 2017. Although Tesla has been selling a $15,000 feature it calls Full Self-Driving, no Tesla, nor any commercially available car, can drive itself — not even around the block, much less across the continent.

A few months after the factory incident, Hothi was out driving and came across a Tesla-owned vehicle with mounted cameras that Hothi assumed would be used for a video that would show off the car's self-driving abilities. He took pictures from his car.

Tesla claimed Hothi stalked, harassed and endangered the car's occupants, then sought and won a temporary restraining order in court.

When Tesla pressed for a permanent restraining order, Hothi told the judge that the Tesla car's cameras could show exactly what did and didn't happen that day. The judge ordered Tesla to enter the videos into evidence. Rather than comply, Tesla dropped the case.

Shortly after, in August 2019, Musk was exchanging emails with Aaron Greenspan, a longtime Tesla critic who runs the legal document search engine called PlainSite. In one of those emails, Musk wrote, "[a]s for the people you mention below, they have actively harassed and, in the case of Hothi, almost killed Tesla employees. What was a sideswipe when Hothi hit one of our people could easily have been a death with 6 inches of difference."

Greenspan was well known for sharing correspondence with people such as Musk on social media. Musk is known for writing emails to employees that are then widely distributed over the Internet. Musk never told Greenspan the emails were confidential, Greenspan said. He posted Musk's claims about Hothi on Twitter, and they went viral.

'I feel vindicated'

To prove defamation, legal experts say, a plaintiff generally must show that a defendant made a false statement purporting to be fact; that it was published or communicated to a third person; that the defendant was, at least, negligent; and that the plaintiff suffered reputational damage or other harm.

Hothi, in a statement Monday, said: "I brought this case to defend my work, clear my name, and send a message. I believe I've accomplished that, thanks in no small part to Musk, whose own behavior over the last year has highlighted the need to scrutinize his every word and deed. This case was about taking a stand, not seeking fame or money. I feel vindicated."

His case depended on donations from friends and supporters, and those funds were not inexhaustible. If he had lost the case, he could have been required to pay the billionaire's legal fee.

When his case was filed, Hothi said a simple apology from Musk was all he wanted. He hasn't received one to date.

SpaceX used habitat as a 'dumping ground'

Environmental groups in Texas sue FAA, alleging it's falling short in shielding land around launch site.

BY SAMANTHA MASUNAGA

PATRICK T. FALLON AFP/Getty Images

SPACEX'S Starship lifts off last month on a test flight from Boca Chica, Texas. The launch site is near the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

In the latest fallout from SpaceX's Starship launch, south Texas environmental groups and a nonprofit representing Native Americans are suing the Federal Aviation Administration, alleging that the agency is not adequately protecting the surrounding natural habitat.

The lawsuit, filed Monday, alleges that the FAA did not properly assess the environmental and community impacts of SpaceX's launch site near Boca Chica, Texas, and that the mitigation measures it has prescribed are not enough to protect nearby wildlife.

The launch site is near the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Boca Chica State Park. The location is a prime habitat for wintering shorebirds and other wildlife, including ocelots and sea turtles.

After the Starship rocket's explosive test flight on April 20, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that the launch hurled concrete particles up to 6½ miles northwest of the launchpad and created about 385 acres of debris on SpaceX's site as well as Boca Chica State Park. A 3½-acre fire also started in Boca Chica State Park, the agency said.

"It's vital that we protect life on Earth even as we look to the stars in this modern era of spaceflight," Jared Margolis, a senior attorney at the nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity, said in a statement. "Federal officials should defend vulnerable wildlife and frontline communities, not give a pass to corporate interests that want to use treasured coastal landscapes as a dumping ground for space waste."

Plaintiffs for the case include the Center for Biological Diversity; the American Bird Conservancy; the Surfrider Foundation, which advocates for protection of the ocean; Save RGV, a local environmental advocacy group; and the Carrizo/Comecrudo Nation of Texas, a nonprofit cultural institution focusing on descendants of the Carrizo/Comecrudo people and other Indigenous groups.

The Carrizo/Comecrudo Nation of Texas joined the lawsuit because frequent road closures in the area due to rocket testing have impeded its ability to perform traditional rituals and customs at Boca Chica beach, according to the lawsuit.

The FAA said in an email that it does not comment on ongoing litigation matters.

The agency had determined in an environmental assessment that SpaceX's launches would not have a significant impact on the surrounding area and issued the Hawthorne company a launch license for operations there.

After discovery of the debris spread, the FAA said SpaceX would be required to have "ongoing monitoring of vegetation and wildlife by a qualified biologist," including a pre- and post-launch survey, and sending a report to the FAA and other state and federal agencies. The Elon Musk-led company would also be required to work with local and federal authorities to remove launch debris from "sensitive habitats."

The FAA is also conducting a mishap investigation of the test flight and will not let the Starship rocket launch again until it verifies that processes and procedures related to the mishap are not a danger to public safety.

The plaintiffs in the environmental group lawsuit are seeking that the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia overturn the FAA's decision to grant SpaceX a vehicle operator license and force the agency to reanalyze the launch site's environmental impact.

Regulator seizes and sells First Republic

FDIC says JPMorgan Chase will take over most assets of the failed San Francisco midsize bank.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Regulators seized troubled First Republic Bank and sold all of its deposits and most of its assets to JPMorgan Chase in a bid to head off further banking turmoil in the U.S.

San Francisco-based First Republic is the third midsize bank to fail in two months. It is the second-biggest bank failure, behind Washington Mutual, which collapsed during the 2008 financial crisis and was also taken over by JPMorgan.

"Our government invited us and others to step up, and we did," Jamie Dimon, chairman and chief executive of JPMorgan Chase, said after the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. seized First Republic.

First Republic's 84 branches opened Monday as branches of JPMorgan Chase, which acquired the bank's $92 billion in deposits and $203 billion in loans and other securities. The bank's shareholders are likely to be wiped out as part of the deal.

Dimon said in a conference call that he believed "this part of this [banking] crisis is over." Other midsize banks reported their results last week, and the vast majority of them showed deposits had stabilized and profits remained relatively healthy.

Before this year, First Republic was the envy of the banking industry. Its well-appointed branches served warm cookies to its clients — who were almost exclusively the rich and powerful. Its bankers lured in wealthy clients with low-cost mortgages and attractive savings rates in order to sell them on higher-profit services such as wealth management and brokerage accounts. In return, the wealthy rarely defaulted on their loans and parked substantial sums of money in the bank that could be lent elsewhere.

But that business model became a liability with the collapses of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank. These banks had large amounts of uninsured deposits above the $250,000 limit set by the FDIC. As was the case with Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank, First Republic clients with large accounts were quick to pull their money at the first sign of trouble.

A coalition of a dozen banks pulled together a $30-billion funding package for First Republic last month that, for a while, seemed to stanch the bleeding of deposits. But it became increasingly clear that First Republic was on borrowed time: It needed to find a buyer or new forms of funding to replace the deposits that had left the bank.

Last week, First Republic reported its first-quarter results and stunned analysts and investors when it revealed that $100 billion in deposits had flowed out of the bank, most in mid-March immediately after the failure of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank.

Once again JPMorgan Chase, the nation's biggest bank with a reputation as a deal maker during times of crisis, became the government's go-to bank. Treasury officials had enlisted JPMorgan last month to lead the $30-billion rescue package.

The Federal Reserve and FDIC, which regulate the banking industry along with the Office of Comptroller of the Currency, could face renewed criticism over their handling of First Republic. Both acknowledged Friday in separate reports that lax oversight had contributed to the failures of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank.

There could also now be questions about the size of JPMorgan Chase, which has more than $3 trillion in assets and is by far the biggest of the "too big to fail" institutions around the world.

Film, TV writers go on strike after talks fail

GARY FRIEDMAN Los Angeles Times

THE STRIKE by Hollywood writers is their first since 2007-08. Above, a picketer at that time walks along Hollywood Boulevard.

[**Strike,** from A1]
ment economy. The previous writers strike in 2007 roiled the industry and lasted 100 days.

The walkout will also mean temporary job losses for crew members and come at a difficult time for the Los Angeles region, where many businesses are still attempting to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and major employers are slashing payrolls. Hollywood studios have laid off thousands of workers as Wall Street investors have punished them for losses linked to their streaming businesses.

Even before negotiations between the WGA and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers began March 20, many in Hollywood believed a strike was inevitable because the sides remained so far apart on key issues.

WGA leaders warned that their members faced an "existential" threat to their ability to earn a living in Hollywood.

Although streaming has been a boon for television, it has upended how writers are compensated. Writers say that they work longer hours for less pay and that they no longer can rely on a steady stream of residual income they used to get in the days of broadcast TV, when successful shows lived on for years in syndicated reruns or the once-lucrative home video market.

The median weekly pay for writer-producers declined 23% over the last decade when adjusting for inflation, according to a WGA survey. When accounting for inflation, screenwriter pay declined 14% in the last five years, the report said.

The union has demanded compensation and other improvements valued at more than $400 million a year, including increases in minimum pay, residuals for streaming and higher contributions to the WGA health and pension plan.

Additionally, the union wants to crack down on practices it says have eroded writers' pay, such as the prevalence of so-called mini-rooms, where small groups of writers on short-order series are hired to craft the arc of a show before it is commissioned, replacing the traditional practice of producing pilot episodes.

For their part, the major studios have said their goal is to reach a fair deal. They've cited their own set of challenges, including pressure from investors to cut costs and build profitable streaming businesses, a slowing national economy and long-term declines in box-office revenues. Amid the upheaval, companies such as Netflix, Warner Bros. Discovery and Disney have laid off thousands of employees.

"The AMPTP member companies remain united in their desire to reach a deal that is mutually beneficial to writers and the health and longevity of the industry, and to avoid hardship to the thousands of employees who depend upon the industry for their livelihoods," the alliance said in a statement.

It's uncertain how long such a walkout would last, particularly if there is no unifying leader to corral both sides as there has been in previous strikes. In 2008, it was Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Bob Iger and then News Corp. President Peter Chernin who united both sides.

The shifting nature of the AMPTP has also complicated the picture because of the varied interest of its members. Now, technology companies such as Amazon and Apple, whose core business is not entertainment, have a seat at the table alongside Hollywood-focused companies such as Disney, Paramount Global and Warner Bros. Discovery. Netflix, which was just a mail-order DVD business during the last strike, also is a key member of the bargaining alliance.

Studio executives have said they didn't want a strike but prepared for the outcome.

"A strike will be a challenge for the whole industry, everybody involved," Warner Bros. Discovery CEO David Zaslav told attendees at a presentation for its streaming service, Max. "We're assuming the worst from a business perspective. We've got ourselves ready. We've had a lot of content that's been produced."

Warner Bros. Discovery and studios have been taking various contingency measures for months in case of a strike, including accelerating deadlines for scripts and film shoots.

The effect of a strike on the major studios will vary. Some have a deep library of shows and films on hand that they can offer to keep viewers watching.

Netflix may have an advantage over other studios because it has a big international production presence. Many of its most popular shows and films are made in countries including South Korea and Thailand.

In an April earnings presentation, Netflix co-CEO Ted Sarandos said that the company wants to avoid a strike but that if there is one, the streamer has enough content that it can "probably serve our members better than most" entertainment companies, he said.

"An extended strike that lasts three-plus months should meaningfully advantage Netflix," Rich Greenfield, a co-founder of LightShed Partners, a technology and media research firm in New York, said in an April research note.

The reduction in costs from not having to produce shows could actually benefit studios, some analysts suggest.

For example, studios could use the work stoppage to terminate costly contracts with writers through so-called *force majeure* clauses that allow a studio to terminate the deal if there is a labor action that lasts for a set period of time.

"While we would not expect Warner Bros. to terminate its deals with star writers such as Chuck Lorre or Universal with Dick Wolf, there are lesser known writers who struck overall deals with studios that do not make economic sense today," Greenfield wrote.

Although the WGA strike has drawn widespread support from other Hollywood unions, a protracted walkout will cause hardships for a wide swath of workers. During the last strike, many of those who lost their jobs — such as set decorators, lighting technicians and makeup artists — did not get their work back as studios scaled back production. The 2007 strike resulted in $772 million in lost wages for writers and production workers, according to the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

The WGA has a strike fund to provide grants or loans to help its members make ends meet during a stoppage. The WGA had $19.8 million of assets in its strike fund as of March 31, 2022, according to its latest annual report.

Times staff writer Meg James contributed to this report.

MARKET ROUNDUP

Stocks edge down after bank failure

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The latest historic U.S. banking failure made few waves in markets, and stocks drifted Monday as Wall Street braced for what it hopes will be the last interest rate increase for a long time.

The Standard & Poor's 500 was virtually unchanged after regulators seized First Republic Bank and sold off most of it in hopes of preventing more turmoil in the industry. The index dipped 1.61 points, or less than 0.1%, to 4,167.87. The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 46.46 points, or 0.1%, to 34,051.70, while the Nasdaq composite fell 13.99 points, or 0.1%, to 12,212.60.

First Republic had been in the spotlight for nearly two months on worries it could be the next to topple after the failures of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank in March. The worry was that runs on smaller and midsize banks could take down the economy, as the financial industry's woes did during the 2008 crisis.

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	34,051.70	-46.46	-0.14	+2.73
S&P 500	4,167.87	-1.61	-0.04	+8.55
Nasdaq composite	12,212.60	-13.99	-0.11	+16.68
S&P 400	2,490.11	-0.29	-0.01	+2.46
Russell 2000	1,769.21	+0.22	+0.01	+0.45
EuroStoxx 50	4,359.31	+4.35	+0.10	+14.95
Nikkei (Japan)	29,123.18	+266.74	+0.92	+11.61
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	19,894.57	+54.29	+0.27	+0.57

Associated Press

But analysts and economists have said they see big differences between then and now, including how the biggest U.S. banks are feeling less pressure this time around. Plus, several banks that have been under scrutiny recently have said their deposit levels have strengthened since late March.

JPMorgan Chase, which is buying much of First Republic's assets, rose 2.1%.

Still, many other questions continue to hang over Wall Street that could shake things up. They include worries about corporate profits and the U.S. government's latest squabble over the country's debt limit.

Above all is what the Federal Reserve will do with interest rates. At its next meeting, which concludes Wednesday, most traders expect the Fed to raise its short-term rate by another quarter of a percentage point, up to a range of 5% to 5.25% from virtually zero early last year.

The hope is that it will be the final increase for a while, which would give the economy and financial markets more breathing room.

The Fed has been raising rates sharply in hopes of getting high inflation under control. But high rates are a blunt tool that slows the entire economy, raises the risk of a recession and hurts prices for investments.

A report Monday from the Institute for Supply Management said manufacturing activity shrank again in April, though not as badly as most economists expected. Other reports this week will give the latest updates on U.S. services industries and hiring across the economy.

Wall Street has been propped up in recent weeks by a stream of companies reporting better-than-expected profits for the first three months of the year. Through last week, with just over half of S&P 500 companies reporting, nearly 4 in 5 had reported higher earnings than forecast, according to FactSet.

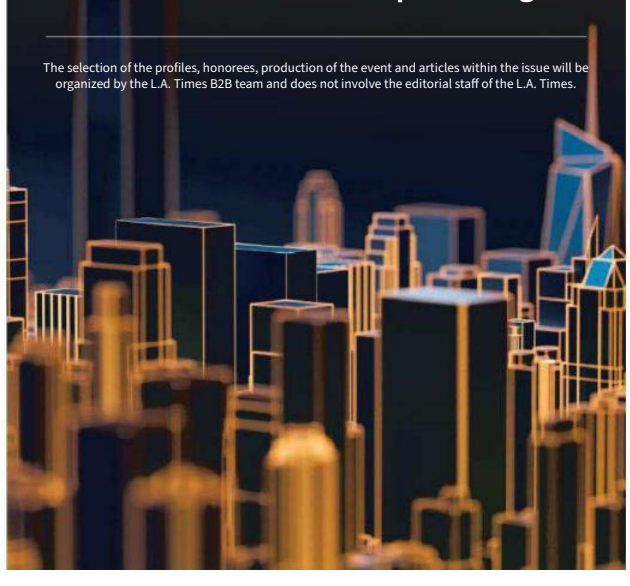
In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 3.58% from 3.43% late Friday. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans. The yield on the two-year Treasury, which moves more on expectations for Fed action, rose to 4.13% from 4.02%.

ATTORNEYS

LIVING TRUSTS AND WILLS
FIDIECOMISOS Y TESTAMENTOS
Avoid Probate Court
Evitar La Corte de Sucesiones
Protect Your Assets and Beneficiaries
Proteja Sus Activos y Beneficiarios
Law Office of Chris C. Clauson
Oficina Legal de Chris C. Clauson
chris@clausonesq.com
Direct: 760-709-2614

WORKPLACE RIGHTS
• Discrimination
• Harassment
• Wrongful Termination
• Retaliation
• Disability
• Pregnancy Leave
NO RECOVERY = NO FEE
Call for FREE Consultation
310-273-3180
KSJM
Kesluk, Silverstein, Jacob & Morrison
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
9255 Sunset Blvd., #411, L.A., CA 90069
www.californialaborlawattorney.com

Los Angeles Times
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
PUBLISHING
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
Trends. Updates. Visionaries.
Deadline: May 3
NOMINATE NOW!
www.latimes.com/b2bpublishing
The selection of the profiles, honorees, production of the event and articles within the issue will be organized by the L.A. Times B2B team and does not involve the editorial staff of the L.A. Times.

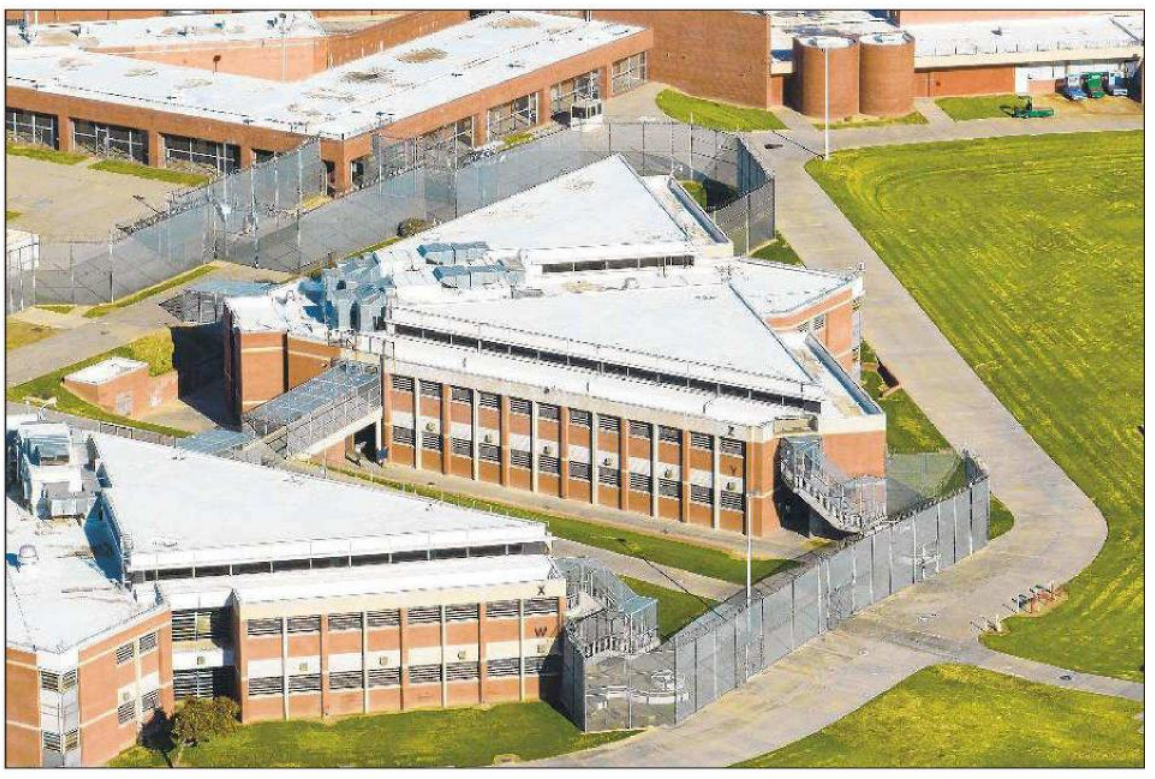


Los Angeles Times
BUSINESS TO BUSINESS
PUBLISHING
IN HOUSE COUNSEL LEADERSHIP AWARDS
Thursday, May 4 | 6PM - 8:30PM
The Beverly Hilton
Scan to reserve your spot today!
www.latimes.com/b2bpublishing
Platinum Sponsor RUTAN UWLA Gold Sponsor Waymaker LLP
Business magazines (print and digital) are produced by the L.A. Times B2B Publishing team and do not involve the editorial staff of the L.A. Times.

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Sexual assaults, probation chaos are connected



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, pictured Nov. 14.

UNDER A PROPOSAL that goes before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, reserve sheriff's deputies would help staff the county's two chaotic juvenile halls, a third hall would reopen, and the county chief executive officer would have emergency powers to take additional actions to save the foundering Probation Department.

The 10-page plan by county CEO Fesia Davenport was unveiled after close of business Friday, less than two weeks before a May 9 court hearing on a lawsuit by the California Department of Justice to compel the county to comply with a 2021 settlement agreement over the abysmal conditions at the juvenile halls. Shortly thereafter will come a state board's decision on whether to close the county's two juvenile halls, and the closure of the state's juvenile justice program, returning hundreds of youths convicted of serious crimes to their home counties.

At first blush it might not seem that the sweeping measure to keep juvenile halls operating has much to do with a mundane subject such as the structure and management practices of the Board of Supervisors. Or the shocking revelation that the county might be on the hook for up to $3 billion in damages to hundreds of people who allegedly were molested as children over the course of several decades while they were living directly under county protection and supervision.

But in fact these things are intimately related.

The alleged sexual abuse took place at juvenile halls, probation camps, foster homes and MacLaren Children's Center, an El Monte facility for children removed from their homes by the county Department of Children and Family Services. Reports of mental, physical and sexual abuse at MacLaren were so rampant, liability was potentially so great and efforts to correct the problems were so ineffectual that the county closed it 20 years ago after a class-action lawsuit.

Similar allegations of sexual and other abuse dogged the juvenile halls, which house youths accused of crimes before adjudication, and camps, where some juveniles are sentenced to remain for several weeks or months. But most remained open until caseloads dropped.

The Board of Supervisors has long struggled to find the best way to manage its most crisis-ridden operations, including the Probation Department and DCFS. In most other counties, supervisors don't interfere with department operations. In L.A. County, critics charge that supervisors cause intractable problems by meddling, micromanaging and barging through the chain of command. The supervisors repeatedly express their belief that the two departments, and the children they're supposed to help, are too important to leave to underlings.

After a previous county chief executive officer retired in 2007, the board could find no one to take the job because of its reputation for interference. It hired a new CEO that year only after agreeing to butt out of department affairs and stick with oversight and policymaking.

But the board chafed at its more limited role and retook direct control of Probation and DCFS in 2011, and later all departments.

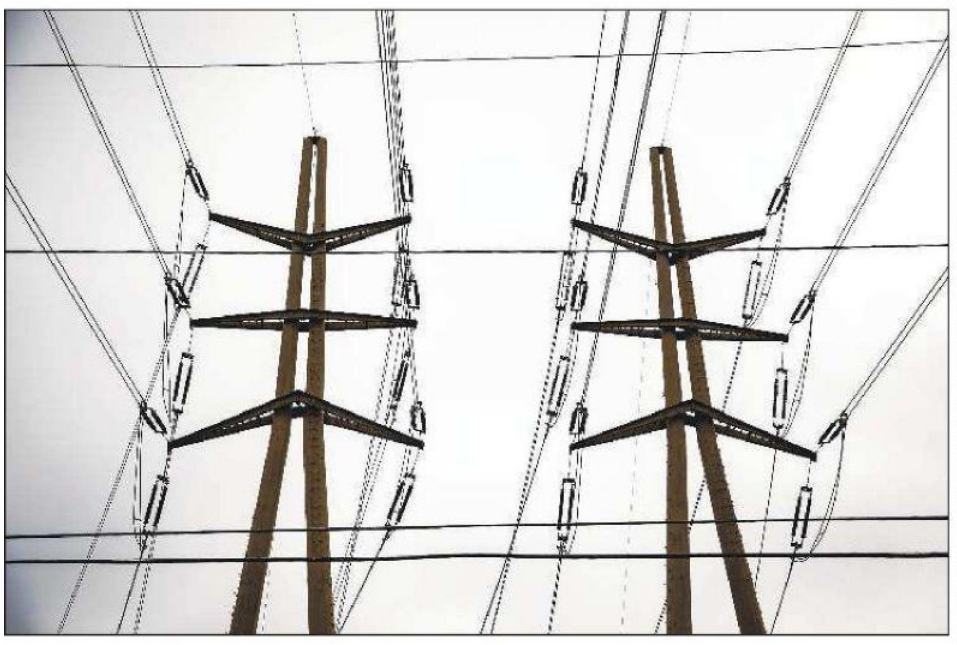
For Probation, at least, the new/old arrangement has gone poorly. Davenport's proposal would now put her more firmly in charge of juvenile probation as the department faces an existential emergency.

Less board meddling and more executive emergency powers may well have been part of an effective prescription had it come forward in recent years. Now, though, with state agencies breathing down the supervisors' necks, it's probably too late.

The Justice Department and the state corrections board should look beyond these last-minute fixes and remember that there are hundreds of people alleging county mistreatment reaching back into the 1970s. Even if past micromanaging by the Board of Supervisors led to the chaos that abetted the mismanagement and injuries, and even if Davenport's proposal would curtail it, the county will continue to have labor contracts that put the interests of employees before juveniles, and an entrenched department culture that may take years to correct.

This year, after some haggling, the supervisors agreed to seek an assessment of its governance and management practices and recommendations for improvement. That's a good move, but it will be August before the board even considers potential contractors to undertake the study. If only the board had moved with the same swiftness on its governance problem as it is now trying to do with its costly juvenile justice crisis.

LETTERS



JAY L. CLENDENIN Los Angeles Times

THE CALIFORNIA Public Utilities Commission is weighing fixed-rate, income-based charges for utility customers. Above, power lines in Hermosa Beach.

Make utilities test fixed charges first

Re "Don't let power companies get their way on our electric bills," editorial, April 27

THE PLAN FOR UTILITIES TO LEVY income-based fixed charges is unlikely to encourage electrification or efficiency.

The charges will penalize customers who use small amounts of electricity and reward those who use large amounts. People living by themselves in small homes or those who have spent thousands of dollars to enhance the efficiency of their homes will see higher bills.

Since there is no empirical evidence that lowering energy charges by a third and introducing significantly high fixed charges will accelerate electrification, the state should conduct pilots to see if the theory holds. It did pilots for two decades with time-of-use rates before moving all customers to those rates.

The utilities have proposed fixed charges that are orders of magnitudes higher than those being charged anywhere else. Most are less than $25, and the national average is less than $11 a month. They could offer rates with fixed charges in the $25 range for those who are shopping for heat pumps or an electric car.

AHMAD FARUQUI, Danville, Calif.
The writer is an energy economist.

The Times' editorial board reaffirmed that how customers are charged for electricity must change so that all customers support grid infrastructure costs without the burden continuing to land disproportionately on lower-income customers.

In response to state law, Southern California Edison was one of many participants that submitted a proposal for an income-graduated fixed charge within electricity bills. Separating fixed costs (for wires, poles, etc.) from electricity usage provides greater transparency on monthly bills. Edison's proposal includes a 33% reduction in electricity usage rates for residential customers.

An important clarification is that California electric rates are decoupled from utility profits, so Edison does not gain additional revenue certainty through the fixed charge, nor does it earn more profit.

The California Public Utilities Commission is leading the review process. We expect the commission's ultimate decision to provide the greatest benefit to the most customers while ensuring that utilities can safely provide affordable and reliable electricity.

MICHAEL BACKSTROM
Rosemead

The writer is vice president of regulatory affairs for Southern California Edison.

::

There is another thing for regulators to consider.

If the difference between an income-based bill and actual usage becomes too great, it will make sense for people with rooftop solar to consider installing a backup battery and cutting the cord completely.

That will leave electric companies facing the same competition that cable companies are now dealing with.

HAL DRAKE
Santa Barbara

Venting on U.S. tipping culture

Re "A new tipping point: Feeling more pressure to leave gratuity," April 30

Having just returned from Japan, where leaving a tip is borderline insulting (implying the workers are reduced to beggars), I appreciated your article on tipping.

I detest American tipping culture. Employees' earnings should not depend on the whims of customers. And what sense does tipping a percentage of the bill make? Waitstaff at a casual restaurant may work just as hard as those at an expensive joint.

Some countries have the right idea: Pay staff a decent wage and forgo tipping. In my experience, service in Australia and Japan is generally friendlier and better than service here, despite (or because of) not having a tipping culture.

RANDALL GELLENS
San Diego

::

Your article struck a nerve with me. I am getting tired of tipping solicitations that come with forced service add-ons. Even recycling centers have tip jars for the person working there. It's crazy.

It's not right for a business to surprise a customer with a bill showing added charges for "kitchen support" or "health insurance." That happened to me twice recently, and in both cases I did not know these charges would be added until I was presented with the bill.

It's too uncomfortable and awkward to question these charges when one is with guests, so in the interest of not making a scene, most people just pay these extra charges without a fuss.

I'm all for rewarding people for good service, and I tip a little something even when the service isn't so good. However, if businesses continue this practice, I'm either not going to leave a tip or going to leave much less.

CAROL HAHN
Malibu

::

When you dine at Gjusta Bakery in Venice — sister restaurant of Gjelina Take Away, which was mentioned in your article — you pick a ticket and wait for your number to be called before you place your order. A 20% service charge (what service?) is added to your bill, and when you pay a screen asks you to leave a tip.

After paying you are given a numbered placard for the runner to find your table. In other words, there is no service. If a customer wants more coffee or food, they must get up and go through the same ordering process.

This is outright manipulation by these kinds of restaurants. If a restaurant is arbitrarily adding a 20% service charge to the bill, then it should refuse any additional gratuity from its customers.

More importantly, it should "serve" its customers.

GIUSEPPE MIRELLI
Los Angeles

::

It's a bit tough to have a lot of sympathy for customers who blow $6 on a cup of coffee and $12 on toast.

JACK SCHWARTZ
Venice

Stubbornly pro-gun governor

Re "Manhunt ongoing in Texas mass shooting," May 1

As law enforcement hunted for the suspect in Texas' latest mass shooting, did this atrocity prompt Gov. Greg Abbott to consider enacting more effective gun-control laws?

Not likely. Who can forget Abbott's demagogic sloganeering in last year's gubernatorial campaign? An article published in The Times' print edition on July 20, 2022, had a photo showing him smugly posing beside signage with a curt, alliterative message: "God, guns, Greg."

It was as if the GOP's preferred deity himself had blessed Abbott and his push for virtually unrestricted possession of ultra-lethal firearms.

So sad that Abbott and his fellow Republicans pander to vacuous masses rather than propose realistic solutions to the gun violence epidemic.

M. EDWARD ALSTON
Santa Monica

::

Abbott is being rightly criticized for identifying the victims of a mass shooting in Cleveland, Texas, as "illegal immigrants" in the same statement in which he offered condolences to their loved ones.

What is wrong with him? This is beyond the pale, a completely disrespectful and un-Christian act. Where is his heart?

Texans, it is time for a major change. This is outrageous and totally unacceptable.

RICHARD A. FRENCH
Pasadena

::

Abbott's response to the recent mass killing in Texas is not as egregious as the fact that he continues to be voted into office.

The first step in achieving responsible gun control in this country is to stop electing politicians who don't view gun violence as a plague upon our nation.

It is no longer shame on them, but rather shame on us as Americans for not taking a stance through our votes.

DORIS K. REED
Palm Desert

HOW TO WRITE TO US

Please send letters to letters@latimes.com. For submission guidelines, see latimes.com/letters or call 1-800-LA TIMES, ext. 74511.

Los Angeles Times
FOUNDED DECEMBER 4, 1881
A California Times Publication

Executive Chairman Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong

News: *Executive Editor* Kevin Merida • *Senior Vice President, Content Business Strategy* Julia Turner • *Managing Editors* Shani O. Hilton, Sara Yasin • *Editor at Large* Scott Kraft • *Deputy Managing Editors* Hector Becerra, Shelby Grad, Sharon Matthews, Christian Stone • *Creative Director* Amy King • *Assistant Managing Editors* John Canalis, Steve Clow, Angel Jennings, Kimbriell Kelly, Iliana Limón Romero, Samantha Melbourneweaver, Ben Muessig, Craig Nakano, B.J. Terhune • *General Manager, Food* Laurie Ochoa • *General Manager, Latino Initiatives* Angel Rodriguez • **Opinion:** *Editorial Page Editor* Terry Tang • *Deputy Editorial Page Editor* Mariel Garza • **Business:** *President and Chief Operating Officer* Chris Argentieri • *Chief Human Resources Officer* Nancy V. Antoniou • *Chief of Staff; Head of Strategy and Revenue* Anna Magzanyan • *Chief Information Officer* Ghalib Kassam • *General Counsel* Jeff Glasser • *V.P., Communications* Hillary Manning

Trolls in comment sections seized the GOP

Republican candidates' dilemma? Win over the crowds engaging in nasty conversations.

JONAH GOLDBERG

Is the GOP becoming a dysfunctional chatroom?

In economics, Gresham's law on currency markets holds that "bad money drives out good." That principle also applies to the comment sections on online sites.

In comment sections — including such mega-versions as Twitter — the nastiest commenters post more, and more obnoxiously, than the decent ones until, eventually, the decent folk just decide not to hang out anymore. The only remedy for this is comment moderation, where grownups in charge try to thwart the trolls lest they lose their more valuable customers.

In Tim Miller's book "Why We Did It," the former Republican operative has a chapter titled "Centering the Comments Section." In it, he explains how, as communications director of Jeb Bush's 2016 presidential campaign, he courted Breitbart News, then run by self-described "Leninist" Steve Bannon. The courtship didn't work out. But Miller describes how Bannon and other right-wing outlets embraced a strategy of pandering to the comment-section warriors to boost traffic and "engagement."

"It was the commenters," Miller writes, "the hobbits who had taken charge. And they were the ones dragging us along, no matter how we assured ourselves that we were in control." And they dragged the right into Trump's arms.

Fast-forward to today, and you can see how that process never stopped. Fox's decision to "respect the audience" amid the postelection tumult — the loudest, most hardcore viewers, before and after the 2020 election — led to huge public relations, legal and financial disasters.

According to texts revealed by the Dominion Voting Systems' defamation lawsuit against Fox News, Chris Stirewalt — then a political editor at Fox and now at the Dispatch — warned that this was folly: "What I see us doing is losing the silent majority of viewers as we chase the nuts off a cliff."

Stirewalt was later fired for his effrontery.

Now, Gresham's law has come to the GOP. Across the country, state parties are being slowly taken over by Trump worshipers, conspiracy theory enthusiasts, et al., who think worrying about "electability" is the stuff of losers, cucks, RINOs and globalists.

Michelle Cottle of the New York Times recently reported from Georgia, where the state party has effectively been taken over by the comment section. Republican Gov. Brian Kemp, who defied Trump's attempts to destroy him in the primaries, has essentially washed his hands of the state GOP, directing donors to ignore it and give their money to his PAC.

Kemp, as well as the Georgia secretary of state, the state attorney general and other top Republican officials, isn't even attending the state GOP convention next month. (Going would be like the "SNL" skit where William Shatner appeared at a "Star Trek" convention.) This schism has its roots in Georgia GOP Chairman David Shafer backing Trumpy challengers over some of his own party's incumbents.

This isn't merely a story of a Trumpist takeover of the GOP. Both parties, weakened by the primary system and campaign finance laws that cut out the middleman between donors and politicians, have struggled to do the basic things parties are supposed to do: pick electable candidates and defend their brand. California's GOP, a stronghold for Republicans until the mid-1990s, was long ago taken over by the talk-radio right.

But Trump accelerated and intensified the dynamic. Pro-impeachment House and Senate members were hunted for sport by state Republican parties in 2020 and 2022, many of them defeated by political goofballs and weirdos with no chance of defeating Democrats in the general election.

After the Jan. 6 riots, tens of thousands of Republicans quit the GOP, surrendering even more ground to those untroubled by association with such behavior.

Shortly before the 2022 election, Kari Lake, the Republican candidate for Arizona governor, held a rally with Bannon onstage beside her.

"We don't have any McCain Republicans in here, do we?" she asked from the stage. "All right, get the hell out," she declared. "Boy, Arizona has delivered some losers, haven't they?"

John McCain was arguably Arizona's most successful Republican politician since Barry Goldwater. Anyone attending Lake's rally was at least open to voting for her. Yet Lake would rather entertain the comment-section trolls than win over real voters.

This is the dilemma GOP candidates face if they want to supplant Trump. They have to win the endorsement of a crowd in an echo chamber having a conversation that the rest of the country thinks is too nasty or weird to join.

@JonahDispatch

It wasn't just First Republic; the banking system failed

By Alexandra Digby, Dollie Davis and Robson Hiroshi Hatsukami Morgan

Jeff Chiu Associated Press

A BRANCH in San Francisco. Compensation in the financial industry has for too long rewarded taking on too much risk.

First Republic Bank became the second-biggest bank failure in U.S. history after the lender was seized by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and sold to JPMorgan Chase on Monday. First Republic is the latest victim of the panic that has roiled small and midsize banks since the failure of Silicon Valley Bank in March.

The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and First Republic underscores how the effect of risky decisions at one bank can quickly spread into the broader financial system. It should also provide the impetus for policymakers and regulators to address a systemic problem that has plagued the banking industry from the savings and loan crisis of the 1980s to the financial crisis of 2008 to the recent turmoil following Silicon Valley Bank's demise: incentive structures that encourage excessive risk-taking.

The Federal Reserve's top regulator seems to agree. On April 28, the central bank's vice chair for supervision delivered a stinging report on the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, blaming its failures on its weak risk management, as well as supervisory missteps.

In each of the financial upheavals since the 1980s, the common denominator was risk. Banks provided incentives that encouraged executives to take big risks to boost profits, with few consequences if their bets turned bad. In other words, all carrot and no stick.

The 2008 crisis is an obvious example. At all levels of mortgage financing — from Main Street lenders to Wall Street investment firms — executives prospered by taking excessive risks and passing them to someone else. Lenders passed mortgages made to people who could not afford them to Wall Street firms, which in turn bundled those into securities to sell to investors. It all came crashing down when the housing bubble burst, followed by a wave of foreclosures.

Incentives rewarded short-term performance, and executives responded by taking bigger risks for immediate gains. At the Wall Street investment banks Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers, profits grew as the firms bundled increasingly risky loans into mortgage-backed securities to sell, buy and hold.

As foreclosures spread, the value of these securities plummeted, and Bear Stearns collapsed in early 2008, providing the spark of the financial crisis. Lehman failed in September of that year, paralyzing the global financial system and plunging the U.S. economy into the worst recession since the Great Depression.

Executives at the banks, however, had already cashed in, and none were held accountable. Researchers at Harvard University estimated that top executive teams at Bear Stearns and Lehman pocketed a combined $2.4 billion in cash bonuses and stock sales from 2000 to 2008.

At Silicon Valley Bank, executives tied up the bank's assets in long-term Treasury and mortgage-backed securities, failing to protect against rising interest rates that would undermine the value of these assets. The interest rate risk was particularly acute for Silicon Valley Bank, since a large share of depositors were startups, whose finances depend on investors' access to cheap money.

When the Fed began raising interest rates last year, Silicon Valley Bank was doubly exposed. As fundraising slowed, startups withdrew money, which required the bank to sell its long-term holdings at a loss to cover the withdrawals. When the extent of the bank's losses became known, depositors lost trust, spurring a run that ended with its collapse.

For executives, however, there was little downside in discounting or even ignoring the risk of rising rates. The cash bonus of Silicon Valley Bank Chief Executive Greg Becker more than doubled to $3 million in 2021 from $1.4 million in 2017, lifting his total earnings to $10 million, up 60% from four years earlier. Becker also sold nearly $30 million in stock over the last two years, including some $3.6 million in the days leading up to his bank's failure.

The effect of the failure was not contained to that bank. Share prices of many midsize banks tumbled. Another American bank, Signature, collapsed days after Silicon Valley Bank did.

First Republic survived the initial panic in March after it was rescued by a consortium of major banks led by JPMorgan Chase, but the damage was already done. First Republic reported that depositors withdrew more than $100 billion in the six weeks following Silicon Valley Bank's collapse, and on May 1, the FDIC seized control of the bank and engineered a sale to JPMorgan Chase.

The crisis isn't over yet. Banks had more than $620 billion in unrealized losses at the end of 2022, largely because of rapidly rising interest rates.

So what's to be done? A bipartisan bill recently filed in Congress, the Failed Bank Executives Clawback, would be a good start. In the event of a bank failure, the legislation would empower regulators to claw back compensation received by bank executives in the five years preceding the failure.

Clawbacks, however, kick in only after the fact. To prevent risky behavior, regulators could require executive compensation to prioritize long-term performance over short-term gains. And new rules could restrict the ability of bank executives to take the money and run, including requiring executives to hold substantial portions of their stock and options until they retire.

The Fed's new report on what led to Silicon Valley Bank's failure points in this direction. The 102-page report recommends new limits on executive compensation, saying leaders "were not compensated to manage the bank's risk," as well as stronger stress-testing and higher liquidity requirements.

Those are also good steps, but probably not enough. Financial crises will continue to happen unless banks and bank executives have reason to consider the interest of the entire banking system, not just the short-term gains they can reap for themselves and their shareholders.

Alexandra Digby is an adjunct assistant professor of economics at the University of Rochester. Dollie Davis is associate dean of faculty, and Robson Hiroshi Hatsukami Morgan is an assistant professor of social sciences, at Minerva University. This article was produced in partnership with the Conversation.

A Texas family is massacred, and responses are cliches

Tragedies like the shooting near Houston inspire familiar lines, but there's one word Americans must eventually say: "Enough."

LZ GRANDERSON

On Friday, police in Texas say, a 38-year-old man in a Houston suburb gunned down a neighboring family. He had been firing shots in his yard, and they asked him to move farther from their home because their baby was asleep. Gone are Sonia Argentina Guzman, Diana Velázquez Alvarado, Julisa Molina Rivera, José Jonathan Cásarez and Daniel Enrique Laso-Guzman, who turned 9 in January.

This pushes us to more than 180 mass shootings in the U.S. this year. There have also been about 6,000 gun homicides so far.

Gun violence has become such a normal part of American life that we have different terms to describe the various forms, the way ancient Greece had multiple words for love or Eskimos for snow. Our shootings? We have: mass, police, drive-by, school, workplace and on and on.

To enter the vernacular, a term must describe something that is both widely known and frequently encountered. In 2023 America, the search is on for a word to describe "shot for ringing the wrong doorbell."

Author Rita Mae Brown has said: "Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going." So what does our morbid gun violence taxonomy say about where we are going?

Or, with near-constant shootings, have we already arrived?

Sadly, after moments like Friday's shooting in Texas, our language has gravitated more toward nonsense than nuance.

Elected officials speak of "senseless violence," as if the senseless kind were the outlier. In fact, it is "sensible violence" that has been proved to be the rarity. Gun advocates push the phrase "good guy with a gun," even though civilians end mass shootings fewer than 3% of the time.

Many will talk about "gun restriction," either for or against it, but what can that possibly mean in a land where guns outnumber people?

Leaders send out their "thoughts and prayers." Once a sign of compassion, now a phrase that shows the speaker is putting in no thought at all, just reflexively using religion as a cover for inaction.

A deflection like "now is not the time" pretends to honor victims but ultimately just makes more of them. Mass shootings are so common in our country that under this pretense of respect for the recently killed, it is usually "not the time" to talk about gun violence.

Hearing how we talk about mass shootings today, you would think this reality had been imposed on us like weather, not chosen repeatedly at the polls. But Americans have continued to elect candidates who bow to the National Rifle Assn. and enthusiastically misconstrue the 2nd Amendment.

Candidates like Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. After that shooting, he wasn't calling for tighter gun laws. He was calling the slain family "illegal immigrants." His attempt to change the subject failed. Because even though Americans have put his ilk in office too many times, we've also seen far too many innocent people die in a hail of bullets — and we're sick of the bloodshed.

David J. Phillip Associated Press

A WARNING sign outside a home in Cleveland, Texas, where a shooting took place Friday. "Thoughts and prayers" will not help. "Senseless violence" is so apt as to almost be redundant.

When San Jacinto County Sheriff Greg Capers spoke about the boy who was killed, he got emotional.

"I don't care if he was here legally. I don't care if he was here illegally. He was in my county," he said. "Five people died in my county, and that is where my heart is — in my county, protecting my people to the best of our ability."

Capers' words hark back to a time when the nation mourned the victims of mass shootings for an interval before turning them into political fodder. Back when such headlines were unusual. Shocking.

It feels as though even our extensive American vocabulary for gun violence can't keep up with 2023. Some are school. Some workplace. One in a dance studio in Monterey Park. Different circumstances and yet painfully familiar, hence our dark and twisted vocabulary.

Capers' words are a reminder that cold classification and callow deflection are not the only possible responses.

The more that leaders and voters can hold to that kind of compassion, the greater the chance that recent bloodshed will bring a familiar word back into our national vocabulary for gun violence: "Enough!"

Mineral could save yards plagued by toxic lead

[**Lead,** from A1]

Zeolite is naturally adsorbent, meaning it can collect other substances on its surface. The porous mineral, often used in agricultural products, detergents and cat litters, acts like a sponge, trapping lead atoms when it's sprinkled on the contaminated lawns. That stops the lead from seeping back up into the air or breaking away into the soil, rendering it safe for plants, animals and humans, Celestian said.

For nearly a century, the now-shuttered Exide Technologies battery recycling plant in Vernon dispersed lead and other toxins across neighborhoods home to predominantly Latino and low-income residents.

According to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control, as many as 10,000 properties near the plant could have been affected by the pollution pouring out of Exide.

California has requested the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency list the area around the plant as a Superfund site to pay for the cleanup, because Exide abandoned the plant in 2020. The $750-million remediation effort, which began six years ago, is the largest and most expensive environmental cleanup in state history.

Though the state toxics agency said it has cleaned thousands of properties, including homes, schools, parks and day-care centers, a Times investigation this year found that numerous properties remediated at great cost to state taxpayers have been left with concentrations of lead in their yards in excess of state health standards.

What's more, the cleanup zone recognized by the state extends to a radius of only about 1.7 miles around the former Exide plant, leaving out many properties with concerning levels of lead contamination.

Michelle Jimenez's home in Huntington Park, about 2.5 miles from the plant, is among them.

Soil samples taken at her home show lead levels several times higher than what California considers safe, according to Prospering Backyards, which is part of a long-term research project with the Natural History Museum and made up of scientists, artists, activists and community members developing an alternative method to reduce lead exposure in the hardest-hit communities.

Growing up in Huntington Park, the 27-year-old Jimenez has been aware of the toxic history behind the Exide plant.

Her father, Luis Jimenez, has Parkinson's disease, anxiety and heart issues she attributes to the neighborhood's exposure to industrial waste. He has lived in Huntington Park since the early 1980s.

Jason Armond Los Angeles Times

HUNTINGTON PARK resident Michelle Jimenez, left, and David Vasquez, a service learning intern at Cal Poly Pomona, collect a soil sample at the home of Jimenez's parents before applying the mineral zeolite.

Children who grew up near the Exide plant have elevated levels of lead in their teeth and blood, according to a 2019 study from the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

"I've known that my community has been exposed to environmental injustices for so long in our soil, water and air," Jimenez said. "I'm so desensitized."

On a recent April morning, Jimenez and community scientists with Prospering Backyards donned their white lab coats and took soil samples from her frontyard.

After they took the samples, the scientists applied the zeolite, which billowed down to the soil in a yellow cloud, and watered the lawn with a hose. Maru Garcia, project lead with Prospering Backyards, placed green flags in the soil where samples were taken.

Jimenez's parents watched from the side. They arrived in California in the 1970s from Jalisco, Mexico, and raised five children in the Huntington Park home.

After the zeolite was applied, Jimenez's mother, Micaela Jimenez, told her daughter she thought her plants and flowers in the backyard would not have been affected by the lead contamination.

Garcia chimed in to tell them about the high amounts of lead concentration in soil samples taken from their frontyard. It's likely there is more lead in the backyard, Garcia said, because toxins from the Exide plant were airborne when they descended on the neighborhood.

"The idea is we want to help more people to become aware of the situation through education, and this is also how to heal our soil," Garcia said in Spanish. "It is not through just information, but through coming to the houses to offer a method that we could develop together to do this remediation."

The zeolite has been deployed in 15 backyards across multiple neighborhoods in an ongoing experiment that started in December, Garcia said.

But research into the project began in 2021, when the Self Help Graphics & Art gallery and community space in Boyle Heights was selected to receive a grant from the Getty Foundation to participate in "Pacific Standard Time: Art x Science x L.A." in 2024.

The exhibit, "Sinks: Places We Call Home," will examine the communities around a former petroleum storage facility known as the Athens Tank Farm in Willowbrook as well as the neighborhoods around the Exide plant. The exhibit's title alludes to the idea that these communities have often served as reservoirs or sinks for industrial waste, curators said.

"I'm using this exhibition to elevate this topic of lead contamination," said Marvella Muro, director of artistic programs and education at Self Help Graphics.

The project is at the intersection of social justice and art, with the voices of the community at the forefront, Muro said. Prospering Backyards invited percussionist Rude Calderón to play a djembe drum, because they feel the process is a form of healing for the earth.

Muro thinks the project will serve as a reminder that this problem is still unfolding.

"It's about understanding the facts behind the contamination and why the obstacles to cleaning them up are so big. They're so much bigger than one person can handle," Muro said.

It has taken roughly two years for researchers with Prospering Backyards to train residents on how to become community scientists and take soil samples from yards. There was also a bit of trial and error to determine which type of zeolite would be best to soak up lead atoms, Celestian said.

At the Natural History Museum, Celestian pointed to several puck-shaped soil samples taken from yards across Los Angeles County, explaining how each sample is examined to determine how effective the zeolite is at pulling out the lead.

Zeolite clinoptilolite, the type of mineral used in the project, is marketed for human consumption and even for pets and livestock, Celestian said. It's a naturally growing mineral that if digested does not break down at the molecular level and simply passes through the body.

"The hope is that this will be a mode that can be adopted by the county. Even if it isn't the final strategy for lead remediation, it's a way to keep lead out of people's bodies," Celestian said.

The current process to clean a lawn contaminated with lead is expensive and time-consuming. California has only enough funding to clean about 5,600 properties around the Exide plant, according to a Department of Toxic Substances Control spokesperson.

The state has requested federal funding, but the toxics agency still recognizes only the roughly 1.7-mile radius around the former Exide plant as the cleanup zone.

The EPA says it is working with the state to collect data to determine if a Superfund status could be considered. The federal agency will begin collecting soil samples in May through August, according to a spokesperson, and the data will be evaluated later this year.

Federal officials visited the site earlier this year and met with local residents, adding that the EPA "understands and acknowledges the negative impacts Exide operations and the subsequent bankruptcy have had on the surrounding community, which is historically overburdened and underserved, and we'll ensure these impacts are documented during the process of considering a Superfund listing."

Homes that have been tested by the state have elevated levels, meaning it's unclear where the zone of toxicity ends, said mark! Lopez, a community organizer for East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice. The group has advocated for a more vigorous cleanup and for the state to expand the toxic cleanup zone to a radius of at least 4.5 miles.

As an activist, Lopez has been pushing for more accountability from California lawmakers to respond to the Exide cleanup. East Yard Communities is working in a similar vein to Prospering Backyards in educating residents about the lead in the yards.

Currently, Lopez is working with the Get the Lead Out research project with Occidental College and the Keck School of Medicine at USC. Project volunteers are meeting with residents, taking soil samples and providing new information to residents who may have not known they were moving into a toxic mess.

The project is also teaching people how to reduce their exposure to the toxins in the ground by making sure they wash their hands, leave their shoes outside their homes so they don't track in contaminated soil and recognize all the resources that are available through the county, like blood testing.

"The reality is that the state's not going to come and clean up within the next couple of years," Lopez said. "So it's something that we're having to do on a more community level."

Few details emerge after 4 killed in shooting in desert

[**Shooting,** from A1]

side what was once a library, converted to a doughnut shop that has since closed.

Anna Saavedra supervises the East Kern Family Resource Center in Mojave, which offers a food pantry, emergency clothing services and parenting training. Saavedra has noticed more people coming to the desert in recent years, pushed out of cities by job losses or other economic hardship.

"Maybe they had a bad experience in one of the big cities," she said. "They come out here, and they're passing through. But then they end up staying."

For the most part, Hayden said, Mojave is a tight-knit community where people look out for each other. "We all know each other, and if we don't, we get to know you."

But in recent years, she could not help but notice a surge of drug abuse — seemingly all methamphetamine — that has relegated a growing population to the city's fringes.

"I've seen kids graduate and just go straight down. And it's the crystal meth," Hayden said.

One was her friend's daughter, a mother of at least five children who was in her late 30s, Hayden said. Addicted to methamphetamine and cycling in and out of jail, she lived in the RV where she was killed, she said.

Two of the other victims, a couple, were also homeless, Hayden said. They split time between an RV parked in an alley and the dirt lot where they were shot, she said.

Myung J. Chun Los Angeles Times

FOUR PEOPLE died after a shooting in a recreational vehicle on this property on H Street in Mojave late Sunday. The names of the victims have not been released, and authorities have not arrested anyone.

> 'They're all on crystal meth. This is all part of drugs, sad to say. ... I've seen kids graduate and just go straight down. And it's the crystal meth.'
>
> — Tina Hayden, describing the victims of mass shooting in Mojave

Relatives of one of the victims, gathered outside a home in Mojave, declined to speak to a Times reporter.

The lot where the mass shooting occurred is west of Highway 14, separated from the center of town by railroad tracks. Bicycle parts and other debris were heaped near the makeshift dwellings. Spray-painted on a trailer were the words: "Keep out! Private property under surveillance."

In the fields surrounding the property, trash clung to scrub brush. It fluttered in the wind that blew the turbines in a field of windmills to the west. Parked nearby was an abandoned semi-trailer, its hood propped open, insides gutted for parts.

As Hayden spoke to a Times reporter, a couple pulled up in a battered pickup truck with scrap metal piled in the bed. A woman in the passenger seat asked, "Are you the property owner?"

"A hauler," Hayden explained, among those trawling the city for metal to salvage and sell.

Kenny Heller, 62, whose property abuts the lot, heard the shots through a back window he'd left open to catch the night breeze: four in quick succession, he said.

The first RV showed up on the lot on H Street about a year and a half ago, Heller said, drawing on a cigarette in his frontyard. The grandmother of the RV's occupant once lived in a house next to the lot. But she fell behind on taxes, Heller said, and lost the house. It has since been fenced off, its windows and doors covered with plywood.

Police would come every once in a while and red-tag the RVs that gathered there, Heller said. People from the real estate company that owned the lot told the occupants to leave. But they stayed, the mounds of junk growing, syringes cast off in the dirt, he said.

"There's people in and out of there every day, all day," he said.

Asked to describe Mojave, the 15-year-resident had a quick reply: "Getting worse."

CALIFORNIA

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023 :: LATIMES.COM/CALIFORNIA

Photographs by WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES MAYOR Karen Bass greets activists and others at a Black Lives Matter event Thursday in Leimert Park, where speakers discussed the People's Budget and the city's Office of Community Safety.

What would it take for city to feel safe?

A new office could help overcome polarization

ERIKA D. SMITH

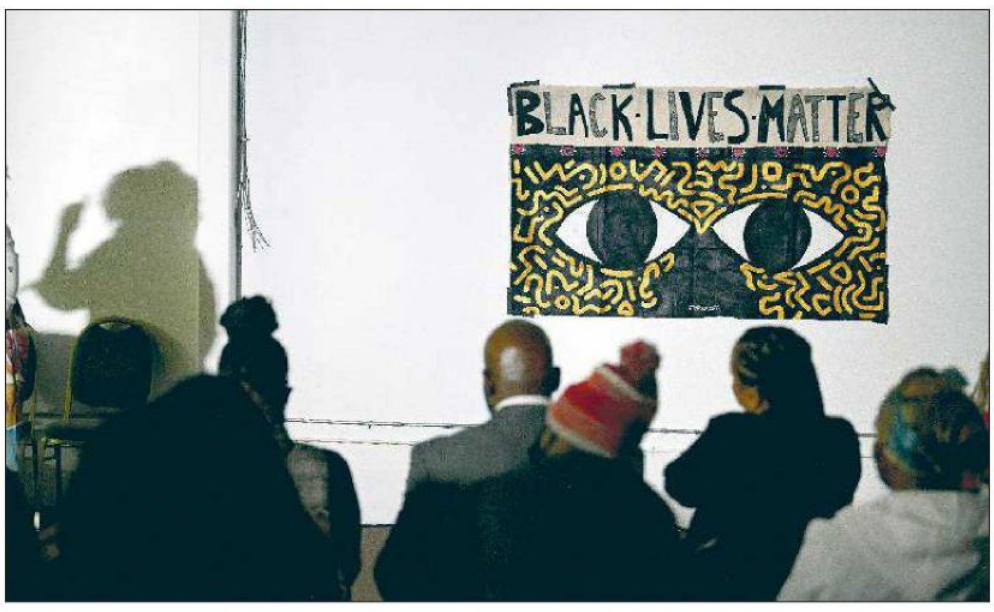
Not long ago, the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California released a pair of polls showing that most adults in this state believe violence is a problem in their neighborhoods and are afraid they or their loved ones will become the victim of a crime.

At the same time, less than half of adults say that police are doing an excellent or even a good job fighting crime and violence. No doubt, some blame the declining staffing levels at police departments, but others point to racial profiling.

None of this is particularly surprising, of course. What the polls found is entirely consistent with the obtusely binary debate over public safety, both locally and nationally.

There are those who want more police on the streets and those who don't. Those who feel violent crime is on an unprecedented rise and those armed with historical data who argue that it's not. And I won't even talk about guns — at least not yet.

[See **Smith,** B5]



THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET is a community-led counterproposal to Bass' official $13.1-billion spending plan, which is under consideration by City Council members.

How Porter's book tour gets the word out about campaign

Congresswoman is far from first politician to try to raise her profile by releasing a memoir.

BY BENJAMIN ORESKES AND MELANIE MASON

At the recent Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, Celine Marcos was giddy after chatting with Rep. Katie Porter and getting the Democratic Irvine congresswoman to sign a copy of her newly released memoir, "I Swear: Politics is Messier Than My Minivan."

The moment wasn't just a book-lover fangirling. Marcos lives in the district of Rep. Adam B. Schiff, a rival of Porter's in California's 2024 Senate race, and has felt "torn between the candidates" in what promises to be a fierce campaign.

Though she had been following Porter's career in Congress for some time, Marcos, 28, who works for the L.A. Community College District, was struck by how Porter's appearance at the festival "was way more on a personal level" than about politics. The one-on-one experience helped shift Marcos' preference in the Senate race — "in Porter's favor, for sure."

Porter is far from the first politician to try to elevate her profile and charm voters and potential donors by releasing a memoir while kicking off a campaign for higher office. But Porter's strategy is another example of how a Senate campaign in California, a vast territory that's home to nearly 40 million people, can require almost quasi-national campaign tactics.

Book tours are practically de rigueur for prospective presidential candidates, as former Vice President Mike Pence, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott have shown in the last year.

Porter's work, which peaked at No. 6 on the New York Times Best Sellers list, offered her a chance to speak before big crowds around the state and across the nation. Already a popular talk show guest, she booked a fresh round of appearances on ABC's "The View," NBC's "Late Night with Seth Meyers" and HBO's "Real Time with Bill Maher" — along with a slew of podcasts, magazine interviews and radio broadcasts.

She also did in-person events in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Francisco, Chicago, the San Diego area, Washington, D.C., and Chicago.

"Going on 'The View' was one of the best appearances I could do," Porter said at the book festival in late April as she scrambled across the USC campus to get from her appearance to the book signing. " 'The View' is a program where people are coming on because they're interested in hearing smart women engaging in a wide variety of issues, whether it's shop-

[See **Porter,** B2]

$15-million gift will seed scholarship initiative at UCLA

Peter Merlone's funds are part of an effort to eliminate the burden of student loans.

BY TERESA WATANABE

As rising college costs impede access to higher education, UCLA on Wednesday announced a $15-million gift to seed a scholarship initiative to help students afford a Bruin education without loans.

The gift by California real-estate investor Peter Merlone will enable UCLA to grant individual scholarships totaling about $20,000 over four years to some 700 students beginning in 2024. It is part of a new UCLA Affordability Initiative designed to eliminate the burden of student loans.

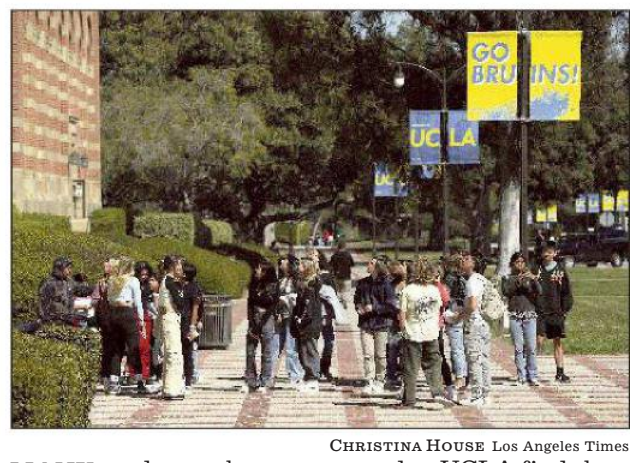
Last year, UC President Michael V. Drake announced a systemwide initiative to provide a debt-free education to all undergraduates by 2030. UC has begun phasing in the program, offering more grants and work-study opportunities to one-quarter of new students this year.

"In this post-pandemic world, where everybody is more attuned and sensitive to the disparities in our community, making education more affordable is something that we just really need to focus on," said Rhea Turteltaub, UCLA's vice chancellor for external affairs. "This is essential."

Other UC campuses also have begun to step up their financial aid. UC Berkeley last year provided no-loan financial aid packages of grants, scholarships and work-study opportunities for the first time to 776 first-year students and 329 transfer students.

Merlone said he hopes to inspire other UCLA alumni

[See **UCLA,** B2]



CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

MANY students who are accepted at UCLA find the cost prohibitive and choose to attend other schools.

Influencer convicted of false report

Katie Sorensen faces jail for posting that a Latino couple tried to kidnap her two kids.

BY SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

A California "mom influencer" who claimed on Instagram in 2020 that a Latino couple had tried to kidnap her two children has been convicted of one count of making a false police report, according to the Sonoma County district attorney's office.

Katie Sorensen, 31, was convicted Thursday and could face up to six months in jail, the district attorney's office said in a news release.

"This verdict will enable us to hold Ms. Sorensen accountable for her crime, while at the same time helping to exonerate the couple that was falsely accused of having attempted to kidnap two young children," Dist. Atty. Carla Rodriguez said in a statement.

She added, "This case is also important in that it illustrates the importance of using social media responsibly."

Sorensen was acquitted of two other counts of making a false report of a crime.

In an emailed statement, her attorney, Charles Dresow, said Sorensen was glad to be acquitted of two charges.

KENT PORTER Press Democrat

KATIE SORENSEN, 31, was convicted Thursday.

"The evidence introduced at trial was very different than how the case has been portrayed outside of the courtroom," Dresow said.

Sorensen called the Petaluma Police Department on Dec. 7, 2020, and claimed that a couple had tried to kidnap her children in the parking lot of a Michaels craft store, prosecutors said.

About a week later, she posted a video on Instagram, adding significant details about the alleged near-abduction that had not been disclosed to police, prosecutors said.

The social media post went viral, with people across the country airing support for Sorensen, who said she shared the video to

[See **Influencer,** B4]

Animal Services funding sought
L.A. mayor's budget proposal faces push-back from officials who want more for troubled agency. **B3**

Jury convicts man of murder
Anurag Chandra is guilty in 2020 doorbell ditch prank after he forced a car full of teens off the road. **B3**

Youngkin rules out presidency
In a visit to California, Virginia governor says he will not launch a campaign for White House this year. **B3**

Esalen Institute sued for racism
Black woman says Big Sur retreat played a video with N-word. **B5**

Lottery **B2**

SPORTS ON THE BACK: It's LeBron James versus Stephen Curry in Lakers-Warriors. **B10**

Congresswoman's book gives her national reach

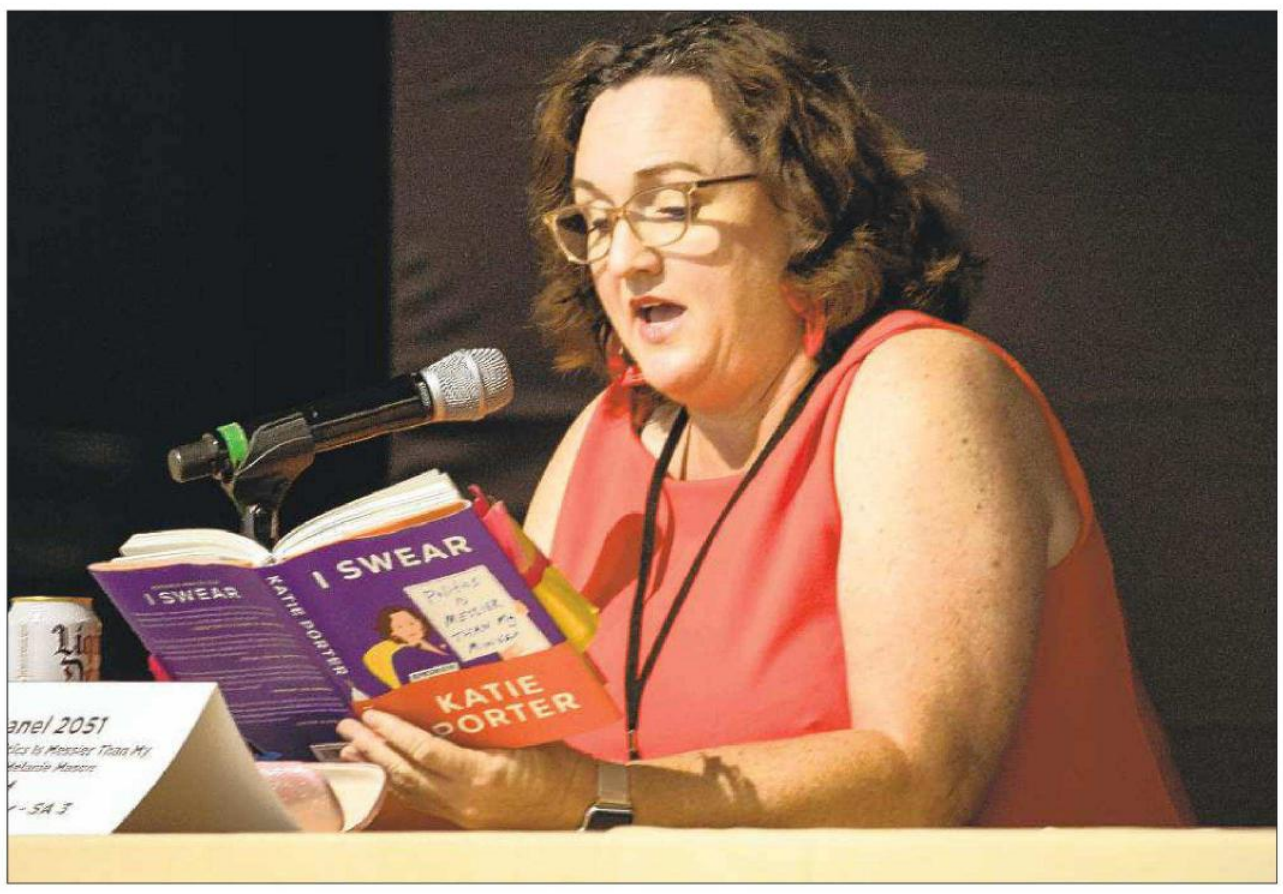
[**Porter,** from B1]
ping for new tableware, or it's talking about abortion rights. I think, for those audiences, inserting politics into areas of conversation that are part of larger things is important."

Political consultant Bill Carrick said the book circuit allowed Porter to tell her story on her own terms and offer to readers and voters a reason for why the candidate-cum-author should be elected. In 2021, Schiff, fresh off leading the House effort to impeach then-President Trump, released a book about his efforts to counter Republican demagoguery and democratic backsliding.

The Burbank congressman's tome was a New York Times bestseller and helped him maintain a national profile by jumping onto the national talk show circuit as well. "Midnight in Washington: How We Almost Lost Our Democracy and Still Could" even won the Los Angeles Times Book Prize in the current interest category.

"These books do answer that question that everybody who is voting is wondering, which is 'Well, what are you for? What are you going to do if you get to the Senate?' " Carrick said.

An added benefit for Porter's campaign is that it didn't have to pay for any of the travel associated with the book promotion. Stacey Stein, a Crown Publishing Group spokeswoman, told The Times all travel arrangements were made by the publisher.



JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

REP. KATIE PORTER (D-Irvine) talks about her upcoming U.S. Senate campaign and her new memoir, "I Swear: Politics is Messier Than My Minivan," at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books on April 23.

Rose Kapolczynski, former Sen. Barbara Boxer's longtime political advisor, noted that in previous eras it was rare for a new member of Congress like Porter to be writing a book and doing national tours.

"One thing a book tour does for you, it gives you a news hook with no need for reporters to talk to your opponents," Kapolczynski said. "There's also a voter outreach side because you can't get elected without being known. Just becoming a more familiar name to voters is a huge step up. If you can do it for free via a news appearance, it saves more money for your campaign later."

The strategy has been used by past candidates for statewide office in California — with mixed results. Republican Meg Whitman, a former EBay chief executive, released "The Power of Many: Values for Success in Business and in Life" during her 2010 campaign for governor, which she ultimately lost to Democrat Jerry Brown. Vice President Kamala Harris published "Smart on Crime: A Career Prosecutor's Plan to Make Us Safer" in 2009 while successfully running for California attorney general.

Porter's appearance on Maher's show included a clash with former CNN host Piers Morgan over the expulsion of three Tennessee lawmakers and whether transgender athletes had a place in women's sports. On Meyers' program, she had a welcoming audience who listened to her talk about Tucker Carlson's recent firing from Fox News.

Porter used the appearance to discuss topics in her book — and defuse potential attacks against her during the campaign. On "The View," she found a sympathetic forum to talk about her contentious divorce and allegations that she is a bad boss. She accused her critics of trying to weaponize painful moments in the lives of her three children for political gain.

"It only comes up in these contexts where people are trying to tear down a strong, outspoken woman," Porter told "The View's" hosts about her husband's domestic violence allegations against her.

> 'One thing a book tour does for you, it gives you a news hook with no need for reporters to talk to your opponents.'
>
> — ROSE KAPOLCZYNSKI, political advisor to former Sen. Barbara Boxer

Like many political tomes, Porter's is part memoir, part manifesto. She writes about her upbringing in rural Iowa during the farm crisis of the 1980s and the lessons learned from her 2018 underdog win in a traditionally Republican Orange County House district. She denounces the influence of big corporations in Washington and offers tips on how to become politically engaged.

But Porter's book also strays from the norm, exploring normally taboo issues such as the strain her job has put on her finances, her family and her self-image. She calls out fellow Democrats — and names names — for out-of-touch behavior and writes about the small and large indignities of serving in Congress.

For example, during her appearance at the Times book festival, she was asked about her bracingly honest writing about her weight. This comes up in the book's second chapter, but Porter said it was the first chapter she wrote and recalls in it that after she won in 2018, commenters on social media said that her ascent was a victory for "fat positivity."

"I say in the book, I remember crying and thinking, 'First, I never really knew I was fat,' " she said to a laughing sellout crowd who had all paid $5 to reserve a seat. "Like most middle-aged woman, the struggle is real, and I sure as hell wasn't feeling positive about it."

Her session at the festival was a mix of lighthearted one-liners and serious comments about the state of American politics. She offered analysis of the Senate race and an explanation of why she thinks California Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein should get to serve out the rest of her term.

At one point, she sidestepped a question about whether the calls for Feinstein to resign were sexist, saying: "We need to think about how to modernize Congress so that when we have these kinds of situations, we have a set of rules and policies in place so that it doesn't become sort of personalized or politicized, and we don't allow any biases to creep into the discussion."

Kiely Wilcox, 28, of Costa Mesa, a product manager for a tech company, said she was excited by the opportunity to see the congresswoman in a unique venue.

"I think when you go see politicians at rallies, it's very scripted. Kind of a 'get in and get out' situation," Wilcox said. "It's really nice to hear her honest, first-thought responses."

The room was rapt when Porter spoke about Trump and the conservative U.S. Supreme Court. After the event, Palos Verdes retiree Ros Wolf stood at the very back of a nearly 200-person line eager to interact with a political hero.

The 76-year-old former lawyer wanted to show Porter photos she had from volunteering on the Irvine resident's 2018 campaign, which launched her political career. And yet Wolf, who said she loves Porter, is undecided about whom she'll vote for in the 2024 California Senate primary.

"I have supported Barbara Lee for 20 years," she said, referring to the Oakland congresswoman and Senate candidate.

Wolf said hearing Porter helped her wrestle with the knotty decision about whom to back in the primary.

"Today is the first time I've heard her speak really in a long time, and I thought she was very powerful," Wolf said.

MARKETPLACE
JOBS · REAL ESTATE · MORE
latimes.com/placead
To place an ad call 1.800.234.4444
Los Angeles Times

Legal Notices

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso)*: 22CHLC12006

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
PARANDZEM MARGARIAN

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can located these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site *(www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)*, the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE**: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la información a continuación.*
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presenter una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo prolegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puedo encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de extención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y hiener sin más advertencia.
Hay otros requisites legales. Es recommendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remission a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisites para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin lines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin lines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
9425 Penfield Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311

The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el número del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abodgado, es):
ANGELIKA SIDORUK, ESQ. (CA Bar No.: 338048)
REESE LAW GROUP
3168 Lionhead Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92010
760/842-5850 (File No. 567367)

DATE *(Fecha)*: 06/09/2022
Sherri R. Carter Executive Officer/Clerk of Court
Clerk *(Secretario)*, by P. Pamaran *(Adjunto)*
(SEAL) **NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED:**
You are served.
5/2,5/9,5/16, and 5/23/23
CNS-3696217#
Published in the Los Angeles Times

Legal Notices

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER (Numero del Caso):
22STCV28325

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
ENZO ZELOCCHI, an individual; KENNETH CHILDS, an individual; DAVID DO, an individual; PARAMOUNT INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES, a California Corporation; and DOES 1-25, inclusive,Defendants

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF
(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE
ADAM IZA, an individual

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the cross-complainant. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court. There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por esqrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al contrademandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o oniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles
Stanley Mosk Courthouse
111 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiffs attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el número del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abodgado, es):
Elan Darvish,
THE DARVISH FIRM, APC
12424 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1115
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 234-4050

Date: 08/30/2022

Sherri R. Carter — Executive Officer/ Clerk of the Court (Secretario)
E. Galicia — Deputy (Adjunto)

Published in the Los Angeles Times 5/2/2023; 5/9/2023; 5/16/2023; 5/23/2023

Los Angeles Times Classified
Los Angeles Times
You're connected.
Los Angeles Times latimes.com

$15 million for UCLA studies

[**UCLA,** from B1]
to contribute to the initiative. When he attended UCLA in the 1970s, he said, the University of California system charged no tuition, and his room and board totaled about $1,800 a year.

Those costs have since spiraled. UCLA's estimated cost of attendance for the 2023-24 academic year is $38,517 for state residents who live on campus.

Tuition makes up only 37% of that cost; the majority of expenses go toward housing, meals, transportation, books and other items.

Student living expenses are increasing rapidly and usually are not fully covered by financial aid — unlike tuition, which is paid through the state's Cal Grant program for more than half of UC undergraduates.

The rising living costs are seen as a major barrier to entry to UC for the state's lowest-income students.

More than 10,000 students with annual family incomes of less than $50,000 declined UC admission offers in 2021 and enrolled in community colleges and California State University campuses instead.

Many low-income families are hesitant to take out loans — the share of UC undergraduates with federal loans dropped by 35% in the last decade — and that reluctance seems to have grown since the pandemic, said Gary Clark, interim vice provost of enrollment management.

Such trends have prompted Merlone and UCLA to expand financial aid efforts.

"I simply want to make it more likely than not that students don't have to borrow money to be able to go to the University of California," Merlone said.

Merlone began a scholarship program three years ago for UCLA-bound students from North Hollywood High School to honor his mother, a former student.

But he said only a handful of students would accept admission offers — even though UCLA is the top-rated public university in the nation — because many could not afford the education and opted for lower-cost options.

Some of the best and brightest students, he said, would choose well-endowed private institutions that could afford to offer full rides.

Merlone said he hopes to contribute to turning those trends around.

Merlone has not restricted his gift to low- and middle-income students, but UCLA officials said they expect to award many of the scholarships to those in need.

"UCLA was founded on the notion that access to a top-tier education should be available to talented individuals of all backgrounds and financial means," Chancellor Gene Block said in a statement.

The initiative expands other efforts UCLA has launched in recent years.

The UCLA Bruin Success Scholarship will provide an additional $2,500 per year to about 1,000 students from families with the greatest financial need — up from $2,000 when the program was launched last fall.

Clark said the program may have helped UCLA last year bring in the highest number of students awarded federal Pell Grants — 1,654 — since fall 2017.

Pell Grants are given to the neediest students — those with family incomes of about $50,000 or less.

In addition, the Westwood campus is launching a pilot program this fall to provide $1,000 scholarships, awarded annually for four years, to about 150 freshmen from under-resourced high schools.

Lottery results

Tonight's Mega Millions
Estimated jackpot: $52 million
Sales close at 7:45 p.m.

For Monday, May 1, 2023

Powerball
Powerball number is **bold**
3-38-55-61-66—**Powerball 1**
Jackpot: $60 million

Fantasy Five: 3-4-11-16-31

Daily Four: 7-7-0-1

Daily Three (midday): 8-9-2

Daily Three (evening): 8-1-6

Daily Derby:
(12) Lucky Charms
(11) Money Bags
(10) Solid Gold
Race time: 1:40.99

Results on the internet:
www.latimes.com/lottery
General information:
(800) 568-8379
(Results not available at this number)

FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

THE PEOPLE UNITED

Hundreds march peacefully down Broadway toward Grand Park in front of City Hall on Monday in downtown Los Angeles. Participants were marking International Workers' Day, also known as May Day, continuing a tradition dating to the 19th century.

Cooler weather brings rare May rain, snow

BY GRACE TOOHEY

After a few warm days, Southern Californians are seeing temperatures drop as a low-pressure system moves down the state, bringing rain and mountain snow — a rarity for the first week of May.

Temperatures across the region fell Monday by about 10 to 20 degrees from Sunday as a strong marine layer from the coast brought light rain to the Southland, according to the National Weather Service.

Highs in the mid-50s to 60s are forecast through Friday — "a far cry from what we had Saturday," said Ryan Kittell, a meteorologist with the weather service in Oxnard.

Over the weekend, the first wave of warm temperatures this year spiked to the 80s and 90s in parts of inland Southern California, but they were short-lived.

"Typically this time of year, we're looking at highs between upper 60s and mid-70s, so we're looking at a good 10 degrees below normal," Kittell said.

Early Monday, much of Los Angeles County got a light drizzle from a "deep marine layer," which will deepen to cloud cover as the low-pressure system moves down from Northern California by Tuesday, Kittell said.

Most of the rain early Monday was minor, but that will change as the week goes on, Kittell said.

"As we get into tomorrow and, especially, Wednesday, we're looking at more actual, legitimate rain showers," he said.

From Tuesday through Thursday, rainfall is expected to hover around half an inch for most of Los Angeles County, with some areas seeing more — significant for May but well below the storms that brought record-setting rain this winter.

San Bernardino County's mountains could also see around half an inch of rain this week, as will regions across Riverside, Orange and San Diego counties, where the heaviest rainfall is expected Wednesday and Thursday, the National Weather Service said.

Forecasters noted that San Diego typically averages three days of measurable rainfall in May, an amount the region will easily reach this week.

Los Angeles County gets a May rainstorm every three to five years that can total around half an inch, but it's not expected each year, Kittell said.

"It's rare in that we don't get rain every May, but it's not unprecedented," he said.

This week will also bring a chance for thunderstorms, and snow is likely at elevations around 5,000 feet, including the Tejon Pass.

"We are expecting thunderstorms," Kittell said. The greatest likelihood will come late Wednesday into Thursday.

"With those thunderstorms, we could see small hail [and] gusty winds," he noted.

The altitude for snowfall will drop by Tuesday to 4,000 to 5,000 feet, with a few inches expected.

"All the snow will stay up in the mountains, but most mountain areas should expect an inch or two," Kittell said. As much as 8 inches is possible at the highest elevations.

He said the Grapevine shouldn't be too bad, but delays are possible.

"Anyone expecting to travel through that area should be up to date on the weather," Kittell said.

Forecasts show that temperatures won't vary much through Friday, but the region should start to slowly get drier and warmer by the weekend.

The cool temperatures mean there's less of a concern for rapid snowmelt — and subsequent flooding — across the state, but rivers are still running high, fast and cold, officials warned.

Yosemite National Park closed over the weekend because of flooding concerns on the Merced River. However, park officials said, the river did not rise as high as expected.

As Yosemite fully opened Monday, officials warned visitors that the park's rivers remained "extremely dangerous."

"Do not go into or even approach rivers in Yosemite," the park said in a statement on Twitter.

In California visit, Youngkin rules out White House run

BY SEEMA MEHTA

Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, widely viewed as a potential 2024 GOP presidential candidate, on Monday ruled out launching a bid for the White House this year.

During an appearance at the Milken Institute's Global Conference in Beverly Hills, Youngkin simply answered "no" when asked if he planned to join a race in which former President Trump, who had endorsed Youngkin for governor, leads the GOP field of candidates challenging President Biden.

"I'm going to be working in Virginia this year," Youngkin said, adding that he would be focused on his state's legislative elections in November. "I have a House that's controlled by Republicans and a Senate that's controlled by Democrats. I want to hold our House and flip our Senate."

Youngkin, who could be a potential vice presidential pick or 2028 presidential candidate, hours later spoke at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley. Echoing Reagan's optimism, Youngkin glossed over his embrace of the culture wars — such as rolling back rights for transgender students and banning the teaching of critical race theory as he spoke about his 2021 victory bucking the Democratic trend in his state, which had elected Democrats for governor and U.S. Senate since 2006.

"Virginians made a different choice," he told about 360 people who paid $65 to hear him speak, saying that voters chose to back parents' rights, education standards, law enforcement and business deregulation. "Conservative policies win because they are grounded in timeless truths, and in common sense. And more importantly, common-sense policies work. Virginia is the test case, proof positive — a state that can lurch left and was falling behind, made a choice and is now winning."

The appearance by Youngkin, 56, was part of the library's "Time for Choosing" speaker series, which is focused on the future of the GOP. It was launched in 2021 after Republicans lost the White House and the Senate majority and a mob of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol in hopes of stopping the certification of the 2020 election.

The library has long been a popular stop for GOP candidates, but it's particularly important for White House hopefuls this election cycle because California is holding its 2024 primary early and has the most delegates of any state.

It will be the site of the second Republican presidential primary debate later this year, but Trump seemed to imply on social media that he may not participate in it because Fred Ryan, the chairman of the library, is publisher of the Washington Post. "President Ronald Reagan would not approve!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

Bass' budget plan for Animal Services far less than sought

L.A. City Council members on Monday ask about agency's funding needs.

BY DAKOTA SMITH

Mayor Karen Bass' proposed budget for the Los Angeles Animal Services Department is facing pushback from city officials who want more funding for the troubled department.

Larry Gross, president of the commission that oversees Animal Services, contacted City Councilmember Bob Blumenfield last week to urge the hiring of more staff, Gross confirmed to The Times. Blumenfield chairs the city's budget committee.

Bass' budget proposed $31.7 million for Animal Services for the fiscal year that starts July 1, an 18% increase over this year's budget for the department. That's far less than the $42 million, or the 56% increase, requested by Animal Services.

City Council members are now reviewing Bass' spending plan.

Gross, in an interview Monday, said he told Blumenfield that a "huge number of staff" are needed.

He also pointed to two recent reports — one by former City Councilmember Paul Koretz, the other from City Controller Kenneth Mejia — that detail Animal Services' various problems, including a lack of employees.

"Everyone is concerned about this issue," Gross said. "If we don't get the staff, what are we supposed to do?"

The Times has chronicled worsening conditions at the shelters, including inadequate care for dogs and small animals. At the same time, the department lacks volunteers who are trained to handle larger dogs, so those dogs are caged for longer periods without walks. The confinement can stress dogs, making it harder for them to be adopted and putting them on a track to be euthanized.

> 'Everyone is concerned about this issue. If we don't get the staff, what are we supposed to do?'
>
> LARRY GROSS, president of the commission that oversees Animal Services

Blumenfield has held hearings on Bass' proposed budget for the department over the last few days.

Appearing at Monday's hearing, Annette Ramirez, Animal Services' interim general manager, told Blumenfield and other council members that Bass' proposed budget doesn't include dozens of positions sought by the department.

Blumenfield asked city analysts for a report back on the staffing problems.

"Likely we can't fund all that, but certainly we want to understand what it is that you say would take to get there," Blumenfield said.

Bass talked up Animal Services in her State of the City address last month and thanked the volunteers who work at the shelters. She said the mayor's office is leading a nationwide search for a new Animal Services general manager.

The mayor's proposed budget for 2023-24 contains one additional regular position for the department, as well as 27 "resolution" positions, which are temporary positions that are later reassessed, said Bernyce Hollins, Bass' senior budget director.

Hollins said Bass' team budgeted a high number of resolution positions because of the expectation that a general manager will soon join the department.

"It's not necessarily that these resolution positions wouldn't be continued, but it is appropriate to allow some flexibility," Hollins said. "So if this [general manager] comes in and says, 'You know what, instead of having positions in this area, I really need them in another area.'"

At Monday's budget hearing, City Councilmember Tim McOsker asked Ramirez whether the department was searching for a volunteer coordinator.

Ramirez responded by saying that the department has a volunteer coordinator. However, she didn't mention that the coordinator, Juan Rivera, has been on administrative leave since Feb. 14. The reason for his absence hasn't been made public.

Data provided by the City Controller's office show that Rivera was paid in the most recent pay period.

Man guilty of murder in ditch prank

Jury convicts Corona resident who forced car full of teenagers off the road in 2020.

BY BRITTNY MEJIA

A Corona man was convicted of murder on Friday for the deaths of three teenage boys who played a doorbell ditch prank at his home in 2020.

Anurag Chandra was convicted of three counts of first-degree murder and three counts of attempted murder after authorities said he intentionally rammed into a 2002 Toyota Prius filled with teenagers and forced it off the road. The jury deliberated for about three hours before announcing it had a verdict.

"The murder of these young men was a horrendous and senseless tragedy for our community. I thank the jury for their verdict. This is an important step toward justice," Riverside County Dist. Atty. Mike Hestrin said in a statement.

Chandra's attorney, David Wohl, called the conviction of first-degree murder "a complete overreach." Wohl said he planned on filing a motion for a new trial.

"I think that we felt worst-case scenario would be voluntary manslaughter, but we also thought we had made a great case for an acquittal outright," Wohl told The Times on Sunday. "The battle has just begun as far as I'm concerned."

The deadly encounter unfolded on Jan. 19, 2020.

Six teenagers were having a sleepover, and one of them dared their friends to pull a "ding-dong-ditch" prank — ringing a doorbell and quickly driving away — at a nearby home, according to an investigation conducted by the California Highway Patrol.

One of the boys rang the doorbell of Chandra's home and ran back to the waiting Prius while Chandra chased after them.

As the Toyota and Chandra's 2019 Infinity Q50 approached Squaw Mountain Road, authorities said, Chandra struck the back of the Prius, causing it to veer off the road and crash into a tree.

Jacob Ivascu of Riverside died at the scene. Drake Ruiz and Daniel Hawkins, both of Corona, died after being transported to a hospital, according to the Riverside County coroner.

Firefighters freed the three other teens trapped in the car: the 18-year-old driver, a 13-year-old and a 14-year-old, according to a CHP news release.

Wohl said that news outlets had reported it as a simple prank but that a teenager had pounded on Chandra's door at 10:30 p.m. and "exposed himself, with pants pulled down below his rear end." Chandra's wife and two daughters were inside the home, Wohl said, and "he was in extreme fear for their safety."

"It was much more serious than a ding-dong-ditch," Wohl said.

The Riverside Press-Enterprise reported that family members and friends of the victims gathered in court Friday, many sobbing as the verdicts were read.

"We are happy to see justice was served even though in this day and age it is hard to come by," Alex Ivascu, the father of two of the teens in the car, told the news outlet.

Riverside County Sheriff's Department

ANURAG CHANDRA was guilty of six counts.

‘Mom influencer’ guilty of making false police report

[**Influencer,** from B1]
“raise awareness.”

“My children were the targets of attempted kidnap,” Sorensen said in the original video, which has been deleted. “It happened.”

She accused the couple of lingering by her car near the children’s double stroller and said she had been “paralyzed” with fear during the incident.

In interviews later with news stations and other outlets, Sorensen would double down, claiming she had been followed into the store by a Latino couple who allegedly made comments about her children.

Police followed up with Sorensen, who in subsequent interviews identified the alleged couple.

Police released images of the couple, Sadie and Eddie Martinez, from surveillance video. Recognizing themselves in news accounts, the two came forward and denied the allegations.

The couple said they had been shopping for Christmas decorations and accused Sorensen of racially profiling them.

“I couldn’t believe it,” Sadie Martinez said during a news conference at the time, according to the Press Democrat. “It’s like we’re literally guilty of being brown while shopping.”

When testifying during the trial, Sorensen said she had “misinterpreted” the events from Dec. 7, the Press Democrat reported.

Sorensen’s report was determined to be false, prosecutors said, and was “resoundingly contradicted” by the couple and by surveillance video from the store.

She has since deleted all content from her Instagram account.

CHRISTINA HOUSE Los Angeles Times

A PRETTY PATH

A man walks next to wildflowers in Rancho Palos Verdes on the first day of May. A low-pressure system sliding down the Central Coast will bring extensive low clouds and some drizzle to many coastal areas.

MARKETPLACE

JOBS · REAL ESTATE · MORE

latimes.com/placead | To place an ad call 1.800.234.4444

Los Angeles Times

MERCHANDISE 800

Miscellaneous Merchandise

FREON WANTED
Certified buyer looking to buy R11, R12, R22 & more! Call Xiomara at 312-697-1976.

EMPLOYMENT 1500

Employment

Software Engineer. Job location Irvine, CA. Telecommuting is available. Sal $110,000-130,000. Send resume w/this ad to Code DID-2188, J. Blalock, Hart, Inc., 18191 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 100, Irvine, CA 92612

You’re connected.
Los Angeles Times latimes.com

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

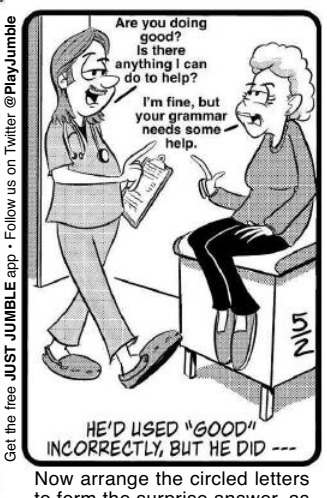
MLBUP

ATEUS

NYAKWS

WREYLA

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble


Are you doing good? Is there anything I can do to help?
I'm fine, but your grammar needs some help.
HE'D USED "GOOD" INCORRECTLY, BUT HE DID ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

©2023 Tribune Content Agency, LLC All Rights Reserved.

Print your answer here: _____ _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday’s Jumbles: SPICY PRANK BIGGER INJURY
Answer: The sherpa credited his success as an adult to his — UPBRINGING

From listing to sold

LA Times Real Estate Classified

Advertise Today
(800) 234-4444

Legal Notices

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)

Case Number (Numero del Caso): 21STCV32492

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
STEPHEN C. MILLS, an Individual; BRANDON DEJOHN DOUVER, an Individual ; JULIE G. FRISINO, an Individual; BARBARA HECTOR , an Individual; JASON G . SCOTT, an Individual

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
MICHAEL JOHNSON, an Individual,

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court’s lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 dias, la corte puede decider en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la informacion a continuacion.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presenter una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es):
LOS ANGELES CENTRAL SUPERIOR COURT
111 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff’s attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):
Michael Johnson, Pasadena, Callfomil 91004 No. : (626) 200-9435
1776 North Madison Avenue,
Pasadena, CA 91004
(626) 200-9435

Date: (Fecha) Sept 02, 2021

Sherri R. Carter Clerk (Secretario)
Y. Tarasyuk Deputy (Adjunto)

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso):*
22NWLC18851

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT *(AVISO AL DEMANDADO)*: MARIA E MIRANDA,
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF *(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE)*: WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (*www.lawhelpcalifornia.org*), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE:** The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.*

*Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (*www.sucorte.ca.gov*), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.*

*Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (*www.lawhelpcalifornia.org*), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (*www.sucorte.ca.gov*) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.*

The name and address of the court is *(El nombre y dirección de la corte es)*: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 12720 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk, CA 90650

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is *(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es)*: ANGELIKA SIDORUK, ESQ. (CA BAR NO.: 338048), ***REESE LAW GROUP,*** 3168 Lionshead Avenue, Carlsbad, CA 92010; 760/842-5850 (File No. 568060)

DATE *(Fecha)*: 08/10/2022
SHERRI R. CARTER EXECUTIVE OFFICER / CLERK OF COURT, *(Secretario)*, by K. VAN, Deputy *(Adjunto)*
(SEAL)
5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23/23

CNS-3696222#

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso):*
22CHLC08474

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT *(AVISO AL DEMANDADO)*: AREV FAKHURYAN,
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF *(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE)*: WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.

You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (*www.lawhelpcalifornia.org*), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (*www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp*), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE:** The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación.*

*Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (*www.sucorte.ca.gov*), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.*

*Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (*www.lawhelpcalifornia.org*), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (*www.sucorte.ca.gov*) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.*

The name and address of the court is *(El nombre y dirección de la corte es)*: SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 9425 Penfield Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is *(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es)*: HARLAN M. REESE, ESQ. (CA BAR NO.: 118226), ***REESE LAW GROUP,*** 3168 Lionshead Avenue, Carlsbad, CA 92010; 760/842-5850 (File No. 567206)

DATE *(Fecha)*: 04/20/2022
SHERRI R. CARTER EXECUTIVE OFFICER / CLERK OF COURT, Clerk *(Secretario)*, by L. LACANLALE, Deputy *(Adjunto)*
(SEAL)
5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23/23

CNS-3696220#

PUBLIC NOTICE

The 2023-2024 Action Plan (Action Plan) is the first annual implementation plan of the Five-Year 2023-2028 Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan for the Los Angeles Urban County (Consolidated Plan). The Consolidated Plan describes the housing and community development needs, as well as activities to address those needs through the Los Angeles Urban County Program, as defined and funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As required by HUD, the Consolidated Plan brings together, in one (1) consolidated submission, the planning and application aspects of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Programs. The Los Angeles Urban County Program’s geographic area encompasses 48 participating cities and the Los Angeles County’s unincorporated areas. Project descriptions, resources to be utilized, and proposed accomplishments for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024) are delineated in the Action Plan. In addition, the Action Plan addresses monitoring standards and procedures.

Furthermore, as per 24 CFR 570.200(h), 24 CFR Part 92.212, and 2 CFR 200.458, the public is hereby notified that under certain conditions, the Los Angeles County (County) and/or its subrecipients may incur costs associated with the CDBG, HOME, and ESG activities identified and described in the 2023-2024 Action Plan prior to the effective date of its grant agreement with HUD. The total amount of any pre-award costs incurred will not exceed 25% of the amount of the County’s anticipated 2023-2024 CDBG allocation. Costs related to the HOME program may not exceed 25% of the County’s current program amount. Costs related to the ESG program will comply with the regulatory requirements as outlined in 24 CFR 576. Citizens are advised that such pre-award costs will have no effect on future grants, and will be in compliance with all the regulations that govern the CDBG, HOME, and ESG Programs as stated in 24 Part 570, 24 CFR 92, and 24 CFR Part 576, respectively as well as the Environmental Review Procedures state in 24 Part 58. Activities that may incur pre-award costs include CDBG public service, program administration, economic development, infrastructure, and housing activity costs as well as HOME and ESG administration and project costs.

A public hearing on the Action Plan will be held before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on:

June 6, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.
Board Hearing Room – 381 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration 500 West Temple Street – Los Angeles, CA 90012

Remote Participation Options available for the public hearing as follows:
Live Virtual Board Meeting via WEB:
- **https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas/live-broadcast**
- **https://www.youtube.com/c/LACountyBOS**

To Listen Only Call: (877) 873-8017
- **Enter access code when prompted:**
  - **o 111111 for English or 222222 for Spanish**

To Address the Board:
- **Please visit the website for more options:**
  - **o https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas/how-to-participate/**

To Submit Written Comments:
- **Public Comments may be submitted through the website at:**
  - **o https://publiccomment.bos.lacounty.gov/**

For more information, please visit the Board’s website at: https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas

Copies of the proposed document will be available during a 30-day public review and comment period from May 4, 2023 to June 6, 2023 at the following locations:

1st District	
Anthony Quinn Library, 3965 Cesar E. Chavez Ave., Los Angeles	(323) 264-7715
Azusa Library, 729 N. Dalton Ave., Azusa	(626) 812-5232
East Los Angeles Library, 4837 E. Third St., Los Angeles	(323) 264-0155
La Puente Library, 15920 E. Central Ave., La Puente	(626) 968-4613
Montebello Library, 1550 W. Beverly Blvd., Montebello	(323) 722-6551
Sunkist Library, 840 N. Puente Ave., La Puente	(626) 960-2707
2nd District	
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, 17906 S Avalon Blvd, Carson	(310) 327-4830
East Rancho Dominguez Library, 4420 Rose St., East Rancho Dominguez	(310) 632-6193
Graham Library, 1900 E. Firestone Blvd., Los Angeles	(323) 582-2903
Lennox Library, 4359 Lennox Blvd., Lennox	(310) 674-0385
Willowbrook Library, 11838 Wilmington Ave., Los Angeles	(323) 564-5698
Woodcrest Library, 1340 W. 106th St., Los Angeles	(323) 757-9373
3rd District	
Agoura Hills Library, 29901 Ladyface Ct., Agoura Hills	(818) 889-2278
Malibu Library, 23519 W. Civic Center Way, Malibu	(310) 456-6438
San Fernando Library, 217 North Maclay Ave., San Fernando	(818) 365-6928
West Hollywood Library, 625 N. San Vicente Blvd., West Hollywood	(310) 652-5340
4th District	
El Segundo Library, 111 W. Mariposa Ave., El Segundo	(310) 524-2722
Gardena Mayme Dear Library, 1731 W. Gardena Blvd., Gardena	(310) 323-6363
Hawaiian Gardens Library, 11940 Carson St., Hawaiian Gardens	(562) 496-1212
South Whittier Library, 11543 Colima Rd., Whittier	(562) 946-4415
Walnut Library, 21155 La Puente, Rd., Walnut	(909) 595-0757
5th District	
Altadena Library, 600 E. Mariposa St., Altadena	(626) 798-0833
Duarte Library, 1301 Buena Vista St., Duarte	(626) 358-1865
La Verne Library, 3640 D. St., La Verne	(909) 596-1934
Lake Los Angeles Library, 16921 E. Ave. O, Suite A, Palmdale	(661) 264-0593
Littlerock Library, 35119 80th St. East, Littlerock	(661) 944-4138
Old Town Newhall Library, 24500 Main St., Santa Clarita	(661) 259-0750
Quartz Hill Library, 5040 West Avenue M-2, Quartz Hill	(661) 943-2454

Assisted listening devices, agenda in Braille, and/or alternate formats are available upon request. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, other auxiliary aids and services, or reasonable modifications to Board meeting policies and/or procedures, such as to assist members of the disabled community who would like to request a disability-related accommodation in addressing the Board, are available if requested at least three (3) business days prior to the Board meeting. Later requests will be accommodated to the extent feasible. Please telephone the Executive Office of the Board at (213) 974-1431 (voice) or (213) 974-1707 (TTY), from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information, please visit the Board’s website at: https://bos.lacounty.gov/board-meeting-agendas

Copies of the proposed document are also available for review at the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), 700 W. Main Street, Alhambra, CA 91801. If the libraries or the LACDA is not open to the public, please review the Action Plan online at https://www.lacda.org.

Citizens wishing to submit written comments during the public review and comment period may mail them, postmarked no later than June 6, 2023, to the LACDA, to the attention of Emily Codilla, Analyst, Community Development Division-Grants Management Unit, or email comments to ActionPlan.Staff@lacda.org. If there are any questions, you may contact Ms. Codilla at (626) 586-1854.

CNSB#3693684

Could safety office help overcome polarization?

[**Smith,** from B1]

With so many people so polarized, I've long thought we've stopped making progress. Then, one evening last week, l saw something in Leimert Park that made me think again.

::

"When we say 'defund the police,' we mean divest from failed social policies. Divest from systems that harm so that we might invest in systems of care."

Melina Abdullah, the co-founder of Black Lives Matter-L.A., was pacing the cavernous main room of the newly opened Center for Black Power, microphone in hand, her voice rising and falling with every step.

She along with dozens of members of other activist groups had gathered in Leimert Park to present their annual People's Budget — a community-led counterproposal to the official $13.1-billion budget plan drawn up by Mayor Karen Bass and under consideration by the Los Angeles City Council.

Based on a survey of residents mostly from South L.A., the People's Budget is chock full of progressive priorities, though its overarching premise is to "reimagine public safety" by redirecting billions of dollars from police to social services and amenities for long-neglected communities of color.

"We believe in transforming the world so we can build new systems that actually keep Black people safe," Abdullah explained.

Unlike Eric Garcetti, who as mayor generally tried to avoid activists (especially after they started protesting outside Getty House and regularly antagonizing members of the City Council), Bass accepted Abdullah's invitation to join them at the Center for Black Power.

Sure, she has known many of these activists for decades, so long that when she arrived, the scene was something like a family reunion, with hugging, laughing and the sharing of old stories.

"I'm happy to be here," Bass said. "I've always come to the community because this is my community."

Still, it speaks volumes about overcoming polarization that she actually showed up to sit in the front row and stare at a slideshow about defunding the police — a slogan that Abdullah helped popularize and Bass once called "one of the worst ... ever."

Indeed, during the campaign, few things seemed to irritate the then-congresswoman more than having to repeatedly deny she had plans to "defund" the Los Angeles Police Department. "How many times am I going to get asked that?" she once snapped when I brought it up.

Fast-forward a few months, and her budget proposal pushes to give the LAPD, which already has a large chunk of the our tax dollars, another $87 million to hire 400 officers to restore the department's ranks to 9,500.

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES MAYOR Karen Bass visits Leimert Park on Thursday for a presentation of the People's Budget, a community-led counterproposal to the $13.1-billion spending plan under consideration at City Hall.

> 'L.A. is in a position to really model what it can look like to have significant investment in community-led safety solutions.'
>
> — KARREN LANE, Office of Community Safety

"I know that that is ambitious, but I think it needs to happen," she told The Times last month.

After Abdullah, a few more speakers got up to make the case for why that doesn't need to happen. Bass finally got a chance to have her say.

First, she acknowledged that public safety requires a comprehensive response. "You have to address the root causes," she said. "You have to address the health and social, the economic issues that lead to our problems."

But she didn't back down from her plan to fund more police, noting that many residents outside South L.A. — from neighborhoods that are objectively safer than many of the neighborhoods in South L.A. — have told her they want more officers.

"I have to be mayor for the entire city," Bass said as she has so many times before. "And I know what the sentiment is in this room. But it doesn't represent the sentiment in the entire city."

Just when many in the room seemed disappointed, ready to stop listening and return to their previously polarized state, the mayor said this: "We are going to invest in reimagining public safety through the Office of Community Safety."

Out came the smartphones to record video as she introduced Karren Lane, deputy mayor for the newly created office.

Although it hasn't gotten much attention with all the back-and-forth over funding the LAPD, Bass has described the office as key to the city's efforts "to break the cycle of violence and crime." In fact, it embodies much of what's in the People's Budget, prioritizing investment over punishment.

Lane explained more of her aspirations when we caught up a few days later.

In the short term, the office is working with nonprofits to oversee the city's gang intervention and anti-violence programs, as well as manage the expansion of unarmed teams that respond to emergency calls. But in the long term, she expects there also will be economic opportunities and other resources.

"The vision is for the office to be the infrastructure for a comprehensive approach to safety," Lane told me. "We are kind of pulling from what is existing in the city, but our goal is to actually build out a system."

That means moving beyond scattered criminal justice reform programs toward "institutionalizing" the mindset at City Hall. In other words, she wants the Office of Community Safety to be just as important and just as well-funded as the law enforcement-focused Office of Public Safety.

"There's a national discourse about safety," Lane said. "And L.A. is in a position to really model what it can look like to have significant investment in community-led safety solutions and having a comprehensive approach to safety."

::

Ultimately, both the local and the national debate over public safety comes down to just that: What will it take for the public to feel safe? (Emphasis on the word "feel" because the data on crime don't always track.)

Too often, when Americans feel unsafe and afraid, we reflexively demand more police and, increasingly, we buy guns for self-defense. We do this because it's what we've always done.

That's why I don't doubt Bass or Lane when they tell me that, despite the survey that led to the People's Budget, some Black and Latino residents in South L.A. want more officers in their neighborhoods too.

An activist acknowledged as much at the Center for Black Power, saying: "One of the things that has happened with history is that we have conflated policing with safety, when policing has historically been used as a tool of violence and control."

I agree. But activists have clearly had less — or at least uneven — success in getting the broader public to agree.

More police are in demand. So what's needed is an alternative to public safety. Not a collection of reform-centric programs or reams of data on actual crime rates, but a strategy to help people feel safe. One that can be replicated in other cities and maybe used to push back on Republican politicians fear-mongering about crime.

Part of the reason so many Americans feel unsafe is because so many more Americans now own guns.

Studies show that violent crime is nowhere near the levels of the 1990s and that more guns merely equal more death. But as I wrote recently, that hasn't stopped people from feeling they must buy and carry a gun for self-defense.

We're unlikely to see a significant drop in gun violence — and fear — until there are fewer guns in circulation in America. And we're never going to see a significant drop in the number of guns in circulation until Americans feel safe without them.

The Office of Community Safety could be a proof of concept on how to do just that. How to move beyond the polarization to achieve true public safety.

Lane doesn't necessarily see her office as an alternative to investing so heavily in law enforcement. But I do — especially if it's given more funding than the LAPD. That's what I would call progress.

Esalen Institute sued over racism in class

BY VANESSA ARREDONDO

A Los Angeles woman has filed a lawsuit seeking at least $1 million in damages against Esalen Institute, claiming the Big Sur retreat and its employees violated her civil rights when an instructor repeatedly played a video with racial slurs during a class.

Nicole Evans, who is Black, booked a stay at the retreat from Sept. 5 to 9, according to the lawsuit, filed Dec. 28 in Monterey County Superior Court.

The institute, a popular escape for celebrities and Silicon Valley executives, proclaims to be a meditation sanctuary. Evans' lawyers said she experienced "one of the most humiliating and traumatizing experiences of her life" there.

Evans attended a meditation class on Sept. 7 led by Lorin Roche, whom the lawsuit identifies as "a faculty member with decades of tenure at the institute." The suit alleges that Roche played a YouTube video featuring a Black comedian. Attendees were laughing at the routine, but "the room became deafeningly silent" when the comic began using the N-word and saying that the "Irish people were the "n— of Europe."

The lawsuit alleges that Roche was aware of the routine's offensive nature and that he looked directly at Evans, the only Black person in attendance, to gauge her reaction. Some attendees also looked at Evans, adding to her fear and humiliation, the suit states.

Roche then allegedly rewound and replayed the offensive part of the video, causing some attendees to groan and walk out of class. Evans was "completely confounded, shocked and overwhelmed with emotion," according to the lawsuit.

"She felt paralyzed and did not know what to do," the lawsuit said. "She felt like a fish in a fishbowl with everyone glaring at her, which in turn made her feel unsafe."

Representatives for Esalen did not respond to a request for comment.

The Times emailed and messaged Roche and his wife, Camille Maurine, who is on the faculty of the Esalen Institute, according to his website, but did not hear back. Roche and Maurine are not listed on the Esalen Institute website as faculty members.

Evans ultimately decided to stay at the retreat. But word had gotten around about the incident, and people kept approaching her about it, making her uncomfortable, the suit said.

She had another class scheduled with Roche on Sept. 8 but joined a different one to avoid him.

Evans was later approached by Roche's wife, who said students had expressed concerns about her husband's behavior during instruction, according to the lawsuit. Maurine insisted that Evans go to his class to talk about the issue, the suit states.

During class, Roche offered no apology and ignored Evans, behaving as if "nothing was happening," according to the lawsuit. A friend Evans had made at the retreat confronted Roche about the incident, and he allegedly said, "I'm sorry that you regular people do not understand the brilliance of the video."

Evans, "humiliated and enraged," walked out of the classroom.

Later that day, Maurine asked Evans to attend a meeting held by a director of the Esalen Institute to discuss the racist incident in the classroom. Roche apologized to Evans before the meeting, but "it was forced," according to the lawsuit. The director said "he was sorry that this had happened to her."

Evans said Roche continued to make negative comments about her after the meeting, saying she was trying to "sabotage" him.

The Esalen Institute did not effectively engage in disciplinary action against Roche for his conduct, despite his history of "discriminatory and bigoted conduct," enabling a hostile environment, the suit states.

"As a result of defendants' actions, plaintiff has suffered and will continue to suffer general and special damages, including severe and profound pain and emotional distress, anxiety, depression, headaches, tension and other physical ailments, as well as medical expenses, and expenses for psychological counseling and treatment," the lawsuit says.

Evans is suing for emotional and mental distress and negligent supervision of an employee. A trial by jury is scheduled for 9 a.m. Tuesday in Monterey.

Obituaries

Place a paid notice latimes.com/placeobituary
Search obituary notice archives: legacy.com/obituaries/latimes

Michelle F. Hart
Mount Sinai Mem Parks
Simi Valley 800-600-0076
mountsinaiparks.org

Robert I. Lehman
Mount Sinai Mem Parks
H. Hills 800-600-0076
mountsinaiparks.org

Nancy L. McStroul
Mount Sinai Mem Parks
Simi Valley 800-600-0076
mountsinaiparks.org

John Arthur LaCombe

April 26, 1950 - April 14, 2023

It is with tremendous sadness that we announce the passing of John LaCombe who died peacefully at his home in Porter Ranch surrounded by family. Always a warrior, John fought cancer valiantly for more than five years, and ultimately made the brave decision to spend his final days with family sharing his unparalleled wit, charm and love with the people he cared for most. His daughters, wife, sister, nieces, grandchildren and other loved ones each received an unbelievable gift, spending quality time with such a remarkable man destined to make his last moments memorable, magical and perfectly extraordinary.

John was born to John and Dorothy LaCombe in Oconto, Wisconsin in 1950. While always having an appreciation for the small town he grew up in, John was destined to head west to Los Angeles as a teenager. It was there that he started a family, raised daughters Shelley, Erin and Melissa, and began a career at Kaiser Permanente that would continue to bless his family until he retired after nearly 50 years. In 1983, John married Anna Scarpelli, and joined a family that took him in as their own. John and Anna would have celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on April 16th.

In addition to his career in healthcare administration, John had a keen eye for innovation holding two United States patents. With a flair for writing, drawing and photography, John's artistic side saw little boundaries. He was a soulful artist, avid golfer, music lover and devoted Christian. There is no doubt he has not missed a heavenly tee time yet, and is doing his best James Taylor impression while sharing a glass of red wine among the friends and family he lost along the way.

Cheers to a man loved by so many, and who will be missed for a lifetime by his enormous fan club. John is survived by his wife Anna, daughters Shelley Bowen (Ed), Erin LaCombe and Melissa LaCombe, grandchildren Peyton, Walker, Violet, Eavan, Logen, Colin and Brendan, sister Joanne Young and many beloved nieces and nephews. A Celebration of Life service will be held Saturday, June 3, at 10:30am at Shepherd Church in Porter Ranch, CA. If you would like to honor John, please consider a donation to Shriner's Hospital for Children.

Michelle Muñoz

April 1958 - April 2023

Michelle was born in New Haven, CT and raised in Puerto Rico. She followed in her father's footsteps by going to medical school, choosing ophthalmology and two subspecialties. She spent part of her 20s working in the Middle East, then joined Bascom Palmer Eye Institute as associate professor of clinical ophthalmology. Years later, Michelle moved to California and joined Kaiser Permanente in Woodland Hills.

Michelle was fearless, warm, and often hilarious. She loved to travel, garden, and read, and was an excellent and dedicated physician. She is survived by a son who made her very proud, four sisters, and a huge family who is forever changed by their loss but grateful for so many moments and memories. In lieu of flowers, please consider giving to Doctors Without Borders.

To place an obituary ad please go online to:

latimes.com/placeobituary

or call 1-800-234-4444

Los Angeles Times

THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

Cool with clouds near the coast: A strong onshore flow will continue today as an upper-level low-pressure area slides down the Central Coast. This will bring extensive low clouds and even some drizzle to many coastal areas. In the deserts, sunshine will be the rule, with a gusty afternoon wind. On Wednesday, the upper-level low will get closer, with showers developing from north to south.

5-day forecasts

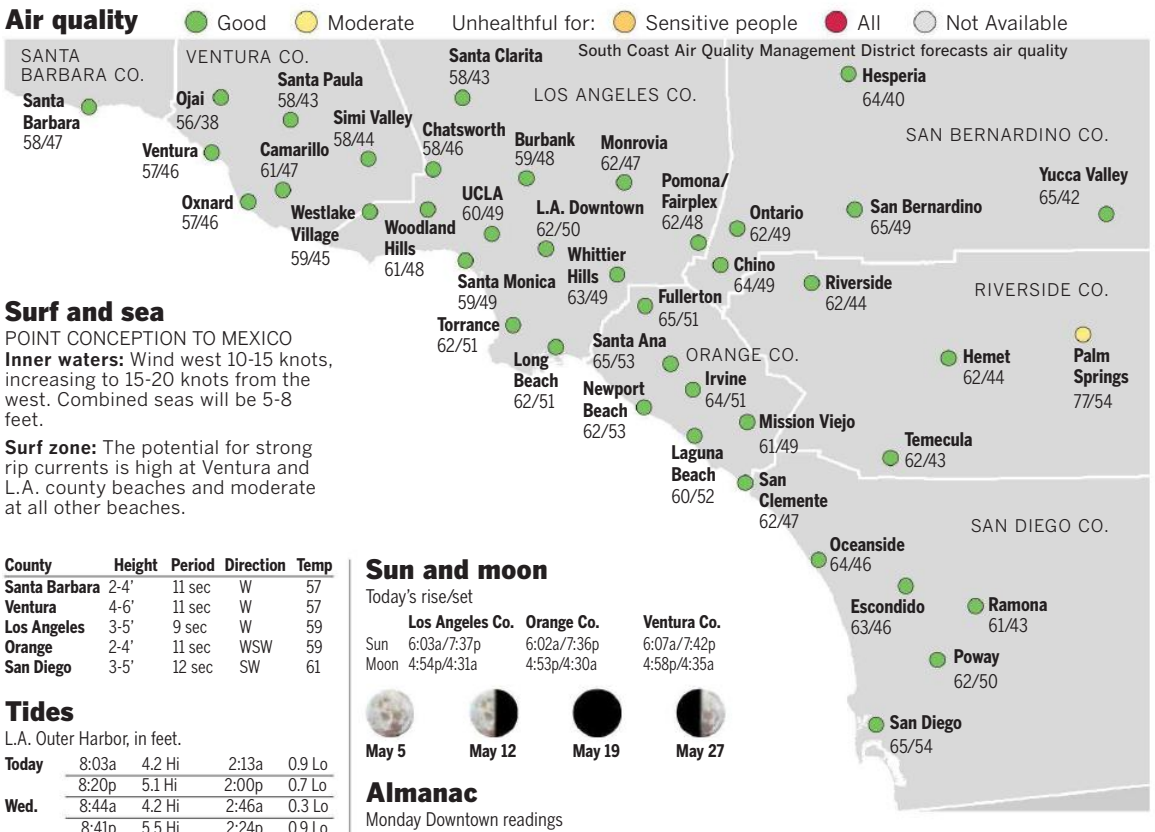
High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

	L.A. Basin		Valleys		Beaches		Mountains		Deserts	
Today	62|50		59|46		59|49		52|24		77|54	
	Mostly cloudy, mist		Clouds, sun; cool		Mostly cloudy, mist		Partly sunny; cold		Mostly sunny	
Wednesday	Mostly cloudy	63/50	Mostly cloudy	59/49	Mist	59/51	Cold	48/26	Breezy	77/52
Thursday	Showers	62/52	Showers	59/49	Showers	59/51	Rain, snow	39/28	A shower	69/55
Friday	Partly sunny	66/51	Partly sunny	63/49	Partly sunny	61/52	Cold	50/29	Warmer	82/59
Saturday	Mostly sunny	68/55	Mostly sunny	70/53	Mostly sunny	65/54	Mostly sunny	55/29	Sunny	87/62

Air quality

Good · Moderate · Unhealthful for: Sensitive people · All · Not Available

South Coast Air Quality Management District forecasts air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO

Inner waters: Wind west 10-15 knots, increasing to 15-20 knots from the west. Combined seas will be 5-8 feet.

Surf zone: The potential for strong rip currents is high at Ventura and L.A. county beaches and moderate at all other beaches.

County	Height	Period	Direction	Temp
Santa Barbara	2-4'	11 sec	W	57
Ventura	4-6'	11 sec	W	57
Los Angeles	3-5'	9 sec	W	59
Orange	2-4'	11 sec	WSW	59
San Diego	3-5'	12 sec	SW	61

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

Today	8:03a	4.2 Hi	2:13a	0.9 Lo
	8:20p	5.1 Hi	2:00p	0.7 Lo
Wed.	8:44a	4.2 Hi	2:46a	0.3 Lo
	8:41p	5.5 Hi	2:24p	0.9 Lo

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people

Las Vegas, 25 · Phoenix, 10
Los Angeles, 45 · San Francisco, 45

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set

	Los Angeles Co.	Orange Co.	Ventura Co.
Sun	6:03a/7:37p	6:02a/7:36p	6:07a/7:42p
Moon	4:54p/4:31a	4:53p/4:30a	4:58p/4:35a

May 5 · May 12 · May 19 · May 27

Almanac

Monday Downtown readings

Temperature	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
High/low	67/57	69/56	62/52
Normal high/low	73/57	76/56	69/50
High/low a year ago	73/57	72/56	63/52
Record high/date	92/2014	98/2014	96/2014
Record low/date	41/1915	46/1999	42/1953

Precipitation	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
24-hour total (as of 5 p.m.)	0.04	0.03	0.02
Season total (since Oct. 1)	27.52	20.56	25.44
Last season (Oct. 1 to date)	12.16	6.46	11.33
Season norm (Oct. 1 to date)	13.70	11.31	15.61
Humidity (high/low)	96/56	100/52	96/57

California cities

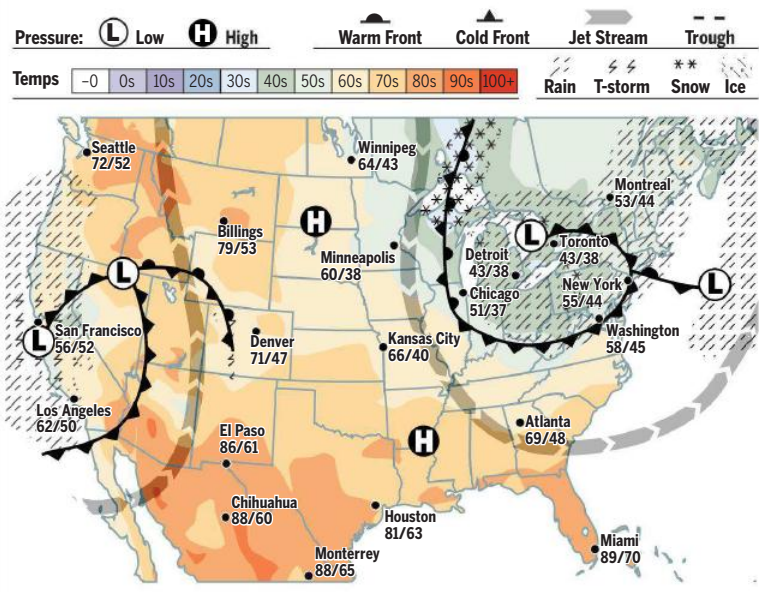
City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
Anaheim	70	57	.02	64	50	63	52
Avalon/Catalina	59	50	--	54	46	55	47
Bakersfield	63	50	--	65	49	66	49
Barstow	79	58	--	74	46	71	49
Big Bear Lake	59	38	--	52	24	48	26
Bishop	78	41	--	65	38	66	37
Burbank	64	54	.05	59	48	60	49
Camarillo	67	54	--	61	47	64	51
Chatsworth	65	54	.01	58	46	59	48
Chino	70	54	Tr	64	49	65	51
Compton	64	55	--	63	51	63	52
Dana Point	63	54	.02	61	49	61	53
Death Valley	95	80	--	85	73	85	74
Del Mar	62	54	--	58	52	61	55
Escondido	66	54	--	63	46	64	49
Eureka	57	48	Tr	58	47	57	46
Fallbrook	66	54	.02	62	43	64	49
Fresno	69	50	--	67	49	66	50
Fullerton	69	56	.03	65	51	65	54
Hemet	62	51	--	62	44	61	48
Hesperia	60	50	--	64	40	62	43
Huntington Beach	68	56	.07	61	51	62	55
Idyllwild	60	39	--	51	37	52	40
Irvine	63	55	.03	64	51	64	54

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
L.A. D'ntown/USC	67	57	.04	62	50	63	50
L.A. Int'l. Airport	64	56	.04	61	52	62	52
Laguna Beach	67	56	.02	60	52	60	54
Lancaster	66	53	--	58	40	59	45
Long Beach	66	55	.10	62	51	63	54
Mammoth Lakes	59	41	--	45	25	46	29
Mission Viejo	64	53	--	61	49	62	53
Monrovia	61	53	--	62	47	63	49
Monterey	55	49	.05	56	49	57	52
Mt. Wilson	xx	xx	xx.0	37	33	38	31
Needles	94	72	--	84	60	85	57
Newport Beach	61	55	--	62	53	62	55
Northridge	66	54	--	60	47	61	49
Oakland	60	52	--	59	50	61	51
Oceanside	66	57	--	64	46	63	53
Ojai	63	53	.07	56	38	58	45
Ontario	67	53	.02	62	49	62	49
Palm Springs	80	63	--	77	54	77	52
Pasadena	65	55	.14	60	46	62	49
Paso Robles	63	41	--	58	48	56	46
Redding	68	51	--	58	48	69	49
Riverside	65	52	--	62	44	61	49
Sacramento	58	50	--	63	48	69	48
San Bernardino	66	55	.06	65	49	63	50

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Wed. Hi	Lo
San Diego	65	57	--	65	54	64	57
San Francisco	59	53	--	56	52	57	50
San Gabriel	66	56	--	62	48	62	49
San Jose	60	52	Tr	60	48	62	48
San Luis Obispo	62	50	--	58	48	57	48
Santa Ana	66	57	.03	65	53	64	54
Santa Barbara	69	47	--	58	47	57	52
Santa Clarita	62	54	--	58	43	62	45
Santa Monica Pier	64	55	--	59	49	59	51
Santa Paula	63	53	--	58	43	61	47
Santa Rosa	59	45	Tr	58	43	65	43
Simi Valley	65	51	.05	58	44	60	48
Tahoe Valley	54	42	--	41	32	48	31
Temecula	63	52	.01	62	43	63	47
Thousand Oaks	63	50	.05	58	45	61	48
Torrance	64	55	--	62	51	61	52
UCLA	xx	xx	xx.0	60	49	62	52
Van Nuys	70	56	Tr	60	48	63	48
Ventura	62	52	.02	57	46	57	51
Whittier Hills	65	54	--	63	49	64	52
Woodland Hills	74	xx	--	61	48	60	49
Wrightwood	59	45	--	49	37	49	33
Yorba Linda	71	55	--	62	49	64	52
Yosemite Valley	59	46	.01	49	33	51	34

Today in North America

Chilly weather in the Northeast: A storm system moving into the northern Great Lakes will continue to drag chilly air south, bringing into the Northeast temperatures that are well below historical averages for this time of year. Mild air will cover the center of the nation.



U.S. cities

MONDAY'S EXTREMES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 99 in Carizzo Springs, Texas

Low 19 in Hettinger, N.D.

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Albany	59	45	.77	53	39	Sh
Albuquerque	82	53	--	77	53	Cy
Anchorage	45	35	Tr	49	35	Cy
Aspen	70	36	--	61	35	Ts
Atlanta	68	50	--	69	48	Su
Austin	83	49	--	80	61	Cy
Baltimore	62	46	.01	56	43	Cy
Boise	81	59	Tr	83	54	Pc
Boston	64	51	.76	56	46	Sh
Buffalo	47	43	.01	42	37	Sh
Burlington, Vt.	57	48	1.08	52	43	Sh
Charleston, S.C.	78	52	--	77	50	W
Charlotte	68	47	--	68	46	Pc
Chicago	49	40	.11	51	37	Cy
Cincinnati	48	40	.32	50	38	Cy
Cleveland	47	38	.30	43	37	Sh
Columbia, S.C.	72	48	--	72	48	W
Columbus	46	38	.31	45	38	Sh
Dallas/Ft.Worth	78	53	--	79	60	Hz
Denver	73	39	--	71	47	Ts
Detroit	50	39	.11	43	38	Sh
El Paso	91	68	Tr	86	61	Cy
Eugene	62	49	Tr	68	45	Cy
Fort Myers	85	69	--	87	69	Su
Hartford	63	48	.95	54	41	Sh
Honolulu	86	72	Tr	83	73	Sh
Houston	83	55	--	81	63	Hz
Indianapolis	48	40	.26	52	37	Cy
Jacksonville, Fla.	85	53	Tr	81	56	Su
Kansas City	64	39	--	66	40	Su
Knoxville	64	43	Tr	62	44	Pc
Las Vegas	89	71	--	77	57	Pc
Louisville	59	47	Tr	60	45	W
Medford	55	49	.05	68	49	Cy
Memphis	69	50	--	70	49	Su
Miami	87	70	--	89	70	Su
Milwaukee	46	38	.27	49	36	Cy
Minneapolis	58	42	.01	60	38	Pc
Nashville	67	48	--	67	47	Pc
New Orleans	83	63	--	83	67	Pc
New York	61	49	.45	55	44	Sh
Norfolk	67	52	.06	68	50	Pc
Oklahoma City	70	43	--	74	51	Pc
Omaha	64	39	--	65	36	Su
Orlando	86	61	--	88	65	Su
Philadelphia	63	50	.65	56	43	Sh
Phoenix	95	73	--	90	66	Su
Pittsburgh	48	39	.31	41	36	Sh
Portland, Ore.	61	53	Tr	68	52	Cy
Providence	62	50	.81	56	42	Cy
Raleigh/Durham	69	45	.14	68	45	Pc
Reno	70	55	.02	53	38	Sh
Richmond	63	49	Tr	65	45	W
St. Louis	66	48	--	65	44	Su
Salt Lake City	87	64	--	79	54	Pc

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Seattle	56	49	.04	72	52	Pc
Tampa	81	68	--	84	70	Su
Tucson	88	63	--	88	60	Pc
Tulsa	71	40	--	74	44	Pc
Washington, D.C.	62	50	Tr	58	45	Cy
Wichita	70	37	--	71	41	Su

World

City	Monday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Acapulco	88	71	--	88	71	Su
Amsterdam	61	48	.21	52	39	Cy
Athens	68	55	.01	70	58	Sh
Bangkok	99	79	.01	97	82	Ts
Barcelona	68	59	--	69	56	Su
Berlin	66	36	--	56	39	Sh
Cabo San Lucas	88	63	--	79	67	Pc
Cairo	81	61	--	83	63	Su
Dubai	97	81	--	94	75	Su
Dublin	63	50	.03	61	48	Pc
Havana	82	62	--	89	73	Pc
Ho Chi Minh City	97	78	.01	99	83	Ts
Hong Kong	80	72	--	82	75	Su
Istanbul	68	52	.06	69	53	Su
Jerusalem	66	47	--	74	53	Su
Johannesburg	72	52	--	74	56	Ts
Kuala Lumpur	92	77	.13	93	76	Ts
Lima	77	70	--	78	69	Pc
London	63	51	.01	59	42	Pc
Madrid	81	52	--	86	54	Pc
Mecca	103	76	--	102	75	Pc
Mexico City	83	55	--	84	55	Cy
Montreal	52	48	.70	53	44	Sh
Moscow	48	40	.03	61	43	Su
Mumbai	88	78	--	89	80	Pc
New Delhi	75	68	.04	82	69	Cy
Paris	65	48	.03	66	44	Pc
Prague	64	36	--	59	42	Ts
Rome	69	59	.34	69	55	Cy
Seoul	70	46	--	78	50	Pc
Singapore	91	80	.08	90	79	Ts
Taipei City	79	66	--	87	72	Pc
Tokyo	72	61	.02	73	56	W
Vancouver	57	46	.01	66	53	Pc
Vienna	66	39	--	61	49	R

Key: **Su** sunny; **Pc** partly cloudy; **Cy** cloudy; **Fg** foggy; **Prcp** precipitation; **Dr** drizzle; **Hz** hazy **Sh** showers; **Ts** thunderstorms; **R** rain; **Sn** snow; **Sf** snow flurries; **I** ice; **Rs** rain/snow; **W** windy; **Tr** trace. **Notes:** National extremes exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Missing data indicated by "xx". Monday's readings as of 5 p.m.

Forecasts by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2023
AccuWeather | Discover our app

Vargas shows promise but is work in progress

[**Vargas,** from B10]

but he has looked especially good turning double plays.

Advanced metrics are less kind to Vargas, who ranked 17th among 19 qualifying second basemen with minus-three defensive runs saved in 27 games, according to Fangraphs, which dings Vargas for range.

But Fangraphs also rated Vargas ninth with an overall defensive score of 0.6, which measures a player's total defensive value relative to league average.

If Vargas can drive the ball more consistently — he was the best pure hitter in the farm system, with a .313 batting average, .878 on-base-plus-slugging percentage, 49 homers and 265 RBIs in 410 minor league games — he could offset his defensive shortcomings.

But the Cuba native entered Tuesday with a modest .202 batting average, .667 OPS, one homer, five doubles and 10 RBIs.

"Big kid like this who everybody thought would play third base, and now you get a guy who can hit the ball, drive the ball out of the park eventually, playing second? That's good value for us and for him," third base coach Dino Ebel said.

> 'Playing here is not fazing him. I just want him to trust the skill set, and if he does that, he'll be OK.'
>
> —Dave Roberts, on Miguel Vargas

"There are going to be mistakes [defensively], but he works hard. He's mentally in tune. He's got a slow heartbeat. He doesn't get excited in the moment. I'm pleased with his performance so far, and it's only gonna get better."

Vargas has been a constant in a middle infield that, because of injuries, already has used four shortstops — Miguel Rojas, Chris Taylor, Mookie Betts and Luke Williams.

Rojas, a 2022 Gold Glove finalist acquired from Miami in January, was expected to play shortstop after Gavin Lux suffered a season-ending knee injury in February. Hamstring and groin injuries have limited Rojas to 12 games, but the 34-year-old still has been a good influence on Vargas.

"He's one of the friendliest guys in the sport, and I'm really glad he's here," Vargas said. "He helps me a lot as a young player with things like my footwork around the base, making my hands work better on double plays, little things in the game. He's given me a lot of information that I can put into play."

Rojas, who has played all four infield spots, helped smooth Vargas' transition from a corner spot to the middle.

"You're not moving much at first and third — balls get hit hard to you, and you're mostly using reaction — but it's different up the middle," Rojas said. "You gotta move your feet and get into good fielding position, and you're gonna have to make longer throws. You have to be aggressive toward the ball going forward as much as side to side."

The Dodgers would like to see Vargas be more aggressive in the batter's box too. Vargas was among the major league leaders with 13 walks in his first 11 games, but he had only two extra-base hits and three RBIs in that span.

Asked before an April 15 game whether Vargas' patience was causing him to be too passive at the plate, Roberts said he would "do a little fly-by" Vargas' locker to discuss the matter. Vargas singled in his first at-bat that night and doubled in a two-run ninth in a 2-1, walk-off win over the Cubs and hit .270 (10 for 27) over his next 10 games.

"I want him to be as aggressive as he can in the strike zone," Roberts said. "I think for me, it's just go out there and keep taking good at-bats."

Vargas hit his first homer of the season in Friday night's 7-3 win over St. Louis, a two-run shot to left field on an 0-and-2 curve from reliever Chris Stratton.

"Hopefully I'll feel more confident at the plate," Vargas said, "now that I'm thinking I can hit a homer."

Vargas also turned a difficult double play on Dylan Carlson's relatively slow roller to third baseman Max Muncy in that game, which Roberts said "was as good a turn as I've seen," and teamed with Muncy on another 5-4-3 double play Sunday.

"It's tough playing a position you haven't played a whole lot of while learning pitchers you haven't seen," Roberts said. "The third deck is not fazing him. Playing here is not fazing him. I just want him to trust the skill set, and if he does that, he'll be OK."

Ross D. Franklin Associated Press

SINCE MOVING FROM his primary third base position, rookie Miguel Vargas has committed only two errors. He doesn't rate well in advanced metrics, though.

Bruins have familiarity with Sturdivant, Ford

[**UCLA,** from B10]

through much of his four years with the Trojans and somewhat shockingly moved crosstown for a better opportunity.

"We obviously knew who Kyle was because Kyle is a local kid from Orange Lutheran," Kelly said. "We had a better understanding of who he is as a player. That helped."

Ford, a burly receiver at 6 feet 2, 220 pounds, had 20 catches for 365 yards and two touchdowns last year after posting similar numbers in 2021. Against UCLA in the Trojans' 48-45 victory in November, he had three catches for 73 yards and a touchdown.

"I saw the way they used a couple guys on this team last year," Ford said. "They put up a lot of points, including against where I was. So watching that firsthand, it was intriguing the way they threw the ball around a lot."

Ford, who has two years of eligibility remaining, is assertive and already has assumed a leadership role. At practice last week, he didn't appreciate being held by more than one defensive back during a scrimmage. After a particularly egregious play, he followed the defense to the sideline and made his feelings known until a coach ushered him away.

"One thing I'm trying to bring to this program is a competitive juice, and I think that's the way I've always been," he said last month. "It's the way I've always played the game and I think it makes everyone better.

"You know, there's points where it goes overboard, but sometimes you need those points. It shows that people care."

Ford and Sturdivant join a crowded group of receivers. Kam Brown, Titus Mokiao-Atimalala, Logan Loya and Josiah Norwood had their moments last season. Yet it's a function of the transfer portal that newcomers bring the most experience.

"We have a lot of youth at that position, so to get guys who have a lot of quality snaps at the Power 5 level is a really big deal," Kelly said. "Both of those guys have been fantastic, really since January when they got here. Their work ethic during the offseason, they know how to train, they know what we are asking of them.

"Sometimes for a high school kid, this is all brand new and they come in wide-eyed and trying to figure it out because they've never been through it. [Ford and Sturdivant] had a decent understanding because they've been through it at another place."

Freelance writer Anthony Gharib contributed to this story.

NL STANDINGS

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
DODGERS	17	13	.567	–	7-3
Arizona	16	13	.552	½	5-5
San Diego	16	14	.533	1	7-3
San Francisco	11	17	.393	5	5-5
Colorado	9	20	.310	7½	4-6
Central	**W**	**L**	**Pct.**	**GB**	**L10**
Pittsburgh	20	9	.690	–	8-2
Milwaukee	18	10	.643	1½	5-5
Chicago	15	13	.536	4½	4-6
Cincinnati	12	17	.414	8	5-5
St. Louis	10	19	.345	10	2-8
East	**W**	**L**	**Pct.**	**GB**	**L10**
Atlanta	19	10	.655	–	5-5
Miami	16	13	.552	3	6-4
New York	16	13	.552	3	4-6
Philadelphia	15	15	.500	4½	7-3
Washington	10	18	.357	8½	5-5

Monday's results
at DODGERS 13, Philadelphia 4
Atlanta 9, at N.Y. Mets 8, 1st game
at N.Y. Mets 5, Atlanta 3, 2nd game
Chicago Cubs 5, at Washington 1
at Houston 7, San Francisco 3
at San Diego 8, Cincinnati 3

AL STANDINGS

West	W	L	Pct.	GB	L10
Texas	17	11	.607	–	5-5
Houston	16	13	.552	1½	7-3
ANGELS	15	14	.517	2½	6-4
Seattle	12	16	.429	5	4-6
Oakland	6	23	.207	11½	3-7
Central	**W**	**L**	**Pct.**	**GB**	**L10**
Minnesota	17	12	.586	–	6-4
Cleveland	14	15	.483	3	4-6
Detroit	10	17	.370	6	3-7
Chicago	8	21	.276	9	1-9
Kansas City	7	22	.241	10	3-7
East	**W**	**L**	**Pct.**	**GB**	**L10**
Tampa Bay	23	6	.793	–	7-3
Baltimore	19	9	.679	3½	8-2
Toronto	18	11	.621	5	7-3
Boston	16	14	.533	7½	6-4
New York	15	15	.500	8½	3-7

Monday's results
Cleveland 3, at N.Y. Yankees 2
at Boston 6, Toronto 5
at Houston 7, San Francisco 3

TODAY'S GAMES

NATIONAL LEAGUE >>>

MATCHUP	W-L	ERA	TIME
PHI/Strahm (L)	2-2	2.31	7 p.m.
Dodgers/Urías (L)	3-3	4.41	SNLA
ATL/Elder (R)	2-0	2.17	3:30 p.m.
MIA/Alcantara (R)	1-2	5.04	
CHI/Wesneski (R)	2-1	5.24	4 p.m.
WAS/Williams (R)	1-1	4.10	
MIL/Peralta (R)	3-2	3.77	5:30 p.m.
COL/Feltner (R)	2-2	4.68	
CIN/Ashcraft (R)	2-0	2.10	6:30 p.m.
SD/Wacha (R)	2-1	6.75	MLB*

INTERLEAGUE >>>

MATCHUP	W-L	ERA	TIME
Angels/Sandoval (L)	2-1	3.16	4:45 p.m.
STL/Matz (L)	0-3	6.23	BSW
N.Y. Mets/Lucchesi (L)	1-0	2.19	3:30 p.m.
DET/Lorenzen (R)	0-1	7.07	
PIT/Contreras (R)	3-1	3.58	3:30 p.m.
TB/Guerra (R)	0-0	8.64	
ARI/Gallen (R)	4-1	2.15	5 p.m.
TEX/Gray (R)	1-1	3.91	
SF/DeSclafani (R)	2-1	2.70	5 p.m.
HOU/Brown (R)	3-0	2.37	

AMERICAN LEAGUE >>>

MATCHUP	W-L	ERA	TIME
CLE/Bibee (R)	1-0	1.59	4 p.m.
N.Y./Cole (R)	5-0	1.11	
MIN/Ryan (R)	5-0	2.81	4 p.m.
CHI/Kopech (R)	0-3	7.01	
TOR/Kikuchi (L)	4-0	3.00	4 p.m.
BOS/Houck (R)	3-1	4.50	TBS
BAL/Wells (R)	1-1	2.79	4:30 p.m.
KC/Yarbrough (L)	0-3	6.35	
SEA/B. Miller (R)	—	—	6:30 p.m.
OAK/M. Miller (R)	0-1	6.48	

* joined in progress

ODDS

NATIONAL LEAGUE			
Favorite		**Underdog**	
at DODGERS	-190	Philadelphia	+160
Atlanta	-116	at Miami	-102
Chicago	-142	at Washington	+120
Milwaukee	-154	at Colorado	+130
at San Diego	-166	Cincinnati	+140
INTERLEAGUE			
Favorite		**Underdog**	
at St. Louis	-136	ANGELS	+116
at Tampa Bay	OFF	Pittsburgh	OFF
New York Mets	-134	at Detroit	+114
Arizona	-132	at Texas	+112
at Houston	-168	San Francisco	+142
AMERICAN LEAGUE			
Favorite		**Underdog**	
at New York	-172	Cleveland	+144
Minnesota	-158	at Chicago	+134
Toronto	-116	at Boston	-102
Baltimore	-138	at Kansas City	+118
Seattle	-162	at Oakland	+136

LEADERS

Through Monday

NATIONAL LEAGUE >>>

Player	G	AB	H	R	Avg.
Arraez, Miami	25	89	39	12	.438
Acuña, Atlanta	29	113	41	26	.363
Marsh, Philadelphia	28	89	30	17	.337
Estrada, San Francisco	27	108	36	19	.333
Hoerner, Chicago	28	124	40	22	.323
Díaz, Colorado	26	84	27	10	.321
Reynolds, Pittsburgh	27	103	33	17	.320
Nimmo, New York	28	103	33	17	.320
Castellanos, Philadelphia	30	116	37	23	.319
Stott, Philadelphia	29	127	40	10	.315

Home runs

Muncy, DODGERS	11
Alonso, New York	11
Wisdom, Chicago	10

Runs batted in

Alonso, New York	28
Olson, Atlanta	25

AMERICAN LEAGUE >>>

Player	G	AB	H	R	Avg.
Chapman, Toronto	28	103	39	17	.379
Bichette, Toronto	29	125	43	19	.344
Arozarena, Tampa Bay	28	110	36	21	.327
Díaz, Tampa Bay	26	94	30	23	.319
Dubón, Houston	24	101	32	20	.317
Merrifield, Toronto	22	79	25	10	.316
Hays, Baltimore	26	93	29	17	.312
Verdugo, Boston	30	122	38	24	.311
Trout, ANGELS	27	107	33	20	.308
Kelenic, Seattle	26	91	28	14	.308

Home runs

Devers, Boston	10
Rooker, Oakland	9

Runs batted in

García, Texas	30
Arozarena, Tampa Bay	28

KATELYN MULCAHY Getty Images

THE PHILLIES' Trea Turner, who played for the Dodgers the previous two seasons, signs for fans at Dodger Stadium on Monday.

Dodgers roll to fourth victory in a row

[**Dodgers,** from B10]
cember.

"I don't know if surprise is the right word," Turner said Monday when asked about the Dodgers' decision not to heavily pursue him. "I had conversations with them in spring training last year, and that didn't work out. Once that happened, anything is possible. It's a business. ... It just didn't work out."

The Dodgers didn't miss Turner on Monday night, riding an explosive and balanced performance from their lineup to a 13-4 victory over the Phillies.

And Turner continued his slow start. His on-base percentage sits at .299 after a one-for-four night.

Will Smith, David Peralta and Jason Heyward all homered during the first three innings, giving the Dodgers (17-13) an early five-run lead over the Phillies (15-15). A two-run single from Freddie Freeman and an RBI single from Smith in the fourth made it 8-1. And from there, the Dodgers cruised, getting another homer from Mookie Betts en route to a fourth straight win.

Still, in the wake of Gavin Lux's season-ending knee injury this year, the Dodgers' void at shortstop in Turner's absence has been hard to fill — with a combination of Chris Taylor, Miguel Rojas (who returned from the injured list Monday) and Betts being asked to compensate.

The optimal time for the Dodgers and Turner to agree on an extension seemed to be before last season, with Turner coming off a National League batting title and entering a contract season on a talent-filled Dodgers roster.

Turner said he had discussions with the team then about a potential deal, and talked about various possibilities with his wife and family, but maintained that no formal offer ever materialized.

Nonetheless, he expected the club to still try to bring him back in the offseason.

"From the conversations I had," he said, "they told me they would be there in free agency."

But by the time Turner actually got there — following a 2022 season in which he batted .298 with 21 home runs and 100 RBIs, despite posting his lowest on-base-plus-slugging percentage in four years — it was clear his market was going to exceed anything the Dodgers were willing to give him.

As a result, the club made only a modest push during his free agency. Turner said the Dodgers had little dialogue with his camp, calling only once or twice over a couple of months. And though a host of other suitors supercharged his bidding — most notably, a late push from the San Diego Padres — the Dodgers made no formal contract offers before he signed his mega deal with the Phillies.

"We considered it and played it out," Turner said of potentially staying in L.A. "But then, when the numbers don't get there or nothing happens, you don't necessarily have to think about it anymore."

It wasn't a surprise outcome.

Turner was able to not only move back East but also reunited in Philadelphia with several of his former Washington Nationals teammates and coaches.

The Dodgers, meanwhile, saw an opportunity to save money and pivot to Lux as their everyday shortstop — a plan that backfired after Lux suffered a season-ending knee injury in spring training but still could give the club a long-term answer at the position when he returns next year.

Nevertheless, the Dodgers' lack of urgency throughout the process wasn't lost on Turner.

He said he wasn't necessarily surprised by their decision and wasn't exactly disappointed. He also complimented president of baseball operations Andrew Friedman for being "honest" with him about where the team was situated.

Turner did, however, compare the Dodgers' apparent lack of interest to the feeling of being traded.

"You're like: 'Man, I just played there. Did they not want me?' " he said. "But I don't think that's necessarily fair either. Like I keep saying, it's the nature of the business. It just didn't work out. You want that two-way street, you want that love, you could say. I think the relationships that I built were very good for me, and I enjoyed it."

DODGERS 13, PHILLIES 4

Streak	Won 4	**This month**	1-0
Home	10-6	**Road**	7-7
Division	7-6	**Interleague**	0-0

Next: Tonight vs. Philadelphia, Dodger Stadium, 7
TV/Radio: SportsNet LA/570, 1020

Philadelphia	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Stott 2b	4	1	1	0	.315
Turner dh	4	1	1	0	.260
Guthrie 3b	1	0	0	0	.000
Schwrbr lf	3	1	1	1	.208
Castllns rf	4	0	2	2	.319
Marsh cf	4	0	2	0	.337
Realmto c	4	1	1	0	.280
Bohm 3b-1b	4	0	1	1	.274
Clmns 1b/p	4	0	0	0	.152
Sosa ss	3	0	0	0	.290
Totals	**35**	**4**	**9**	**4**	

Dodgers	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Betts ss	5	2	3	3	.252
Rojs ss	0	0	0	0	.125
Frmn 1b	5	1	3	2	.305
Miller p	1	0	0	0	.000
Smith c	5	1	2	2	.309
Muncy 3b	4	1	1	0	.238
Heywrd rf	4	2	2	1	.259
Otmn cf	3	1	0	0	.283
Vrgs dh/1	4	1	0	1	.202
Peralta lf	4	2	2	4	.186
Busch 2b	4	2	2	0	.214
Totals	**39**	**13**	**15**	**13**	

Philadelphia	000	121	000 – 4	9	1
Dodgers	131	310	22x – 13	15	1

Walks—Philadelphia 3: Stott 1, Schwarber 1, Sosa 1. Dodgers 8: Rojas 1, Muncy 1, Heyward 1, Outman 2, Vargas 1, Peralta 1, Busch 1. **Strikeouts**—Philadelphia 6: Turner 1, Schwarber 1, Castellanos 2, Marsh 1, Realmuto 1. Dodgers 13: Betts 1, Freeman 2, Muncy 1, Heyward 2, Outman 3, Vargas 2, Busch 2. **E**—Marsh (1), Peralta (1). **LOB**—Philadelphia 7, Dodgers 10. **2B**—Betts (9), Heyward (4), Freeman (7). **3B**—Realmuto (2). **HR**—Schwarber (7), off Gonsolin; Smith (4), off Walker; Peralta (2), off Walker; Heyward (4), off Walker; Betts (5), off Kimbrel. **RBIs**—Schwarber (13), Castellanos 2 (19), Bohm (22), Smith 2 (15), Peralta 4 (14), Heyward (8), Freeman 2 (11), Betts 3 (14), Vargas (10). **SB**—Busch (1).

Philadelphia	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Walker, L, 2-2	3⅓	8	8	8	3	6	82	6.91
Vasquez	1⅓	2	1	1	1	4	30	1.93
Marte	1	1	0	0	0	1	12	13.50
Kimbrel	⅔	2	2	2	1	1	19	5.40
Ortiz	⅔	2	2	2	2	0	25	3.12
Clemens	⅔	0	0	0	1	1	10	0.00
Dodgers	**IP**	**H**	**R**	**ER**	**BB**	**SO**	**NP**	**ERA**
Gonsolin	4⅔	5	3	3	2	3	80	3.38
Bickford	1⅓	3	1	1	0	1	30	4.26
González, W, 1-0	1⅓	1	0	0	0	2	18	0.00
Miller	1⅓	0	0	0	1	0	21	1.32

Inherited runners-scored—Vasquez 1-0, Ortiz 1-0, Clemens 2-0, Bickford 3-2, Miller 1-0.
U—David Rackley, Jeremy Riggs, Edwin Moscoso, Chris Guccione. **T**—2:49. **Tickets sold**—42,137 (56,000).

BRAVES 9, METS 8

Sean Murphy belted a pair of three-run homers, powering Atlanta to a victory over New York in the opener of a doubleheader after the teams were rained out the previous two days.

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Acuña Jr. rf	5	3	3	1	.363
Olson 1b	4	2	1	0	.252
Riley 3b	5	0	0	0	.240
Murphy c	4	2	2	6	.268
Albies 2b	4	0	0	0	.243
Rosario dh	3	0	0	0	.221
Grissom ss	4	0	1	0	.294
Harris II cf	3	1	1	0	.214
Pillar lf	4	1	1	2	.240
Totals	**36**	**9**	**9**	**9**	

New York	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Nimmo cf	5	1	1	0	.323
Marte rf	4	1	1	0	.225
Lindor ss	3	2	1	1	.221
Alonso 1b	4	2	1	3	.257
McNeil lf-2b	4	0	1	0	.296
Voglbch dh	3	0	1	1	.275
Escobar	1	1	1	1	.172
Baty 3b	5	1	2	1	.343
Guillorme 2b	2	0	0	0	.233
Pham lf	1	0	0	0	.191
Nido c	2	0	0	0	.111
Canha	1	0	0	0	.221
Álvarez c	0	0	0	0	.194
Totals	**35**	**8**	**9**	**7**	

Atlanta	330	000	300 – 9	9	1
New York	103	001	201 – 8	9	0

Walks—Atlanta 3: Olson 1, Rosario 1, Harris II 1. New York 4: Marte 1, Lindor 1, Vogelbach 1, Pham 1. **Strikeouts**—Atlanta 6: Olson 1, Albies 1, Grissom 1, Harris II 1, Pillar 2. New York 11: Nimmo 3, Marte 1, Lindor 1, Alonso 2, Vogelbach 1, Baty 1, Guillorme 2. **E**—Grissom (4). **LOB**—Atlanta 3, New York 8. **2B**—Acuña Jr. (10). **3B**—Nimmo (1). **HR**—Murphy (7), off Reyes; Pillar (2), off Reyes; Acuña Jr. (5), off Curtiss; Murphy (8), off Brigham; Alonso (11), off Strider; Baty (2), off Lee; Escobar (3), off Minter. **RBIs**—Murphy 6 (22), Pillar 2 (7), Acuña Jr. (15), Lindor (22), Alonso 3 (28), Baty (4), Vogelbach (10), Escobar (9). **SB**—Lindor (3), Marte (9). **S**—Nido.
Runners moved up—Nimmo.

Atlanta	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Strider, W, 4-0	5	5	4	4	3	8	107	2.57
Lee, H, 6	⅔	1	1	1	1	0	19	2.03
McHugh, H, 3	⅔	2	2	2	0	0	22	3.86
Chavez, H, 8	⅔	0	0	0	0	0	9	3.27
Anderson, H, 4	1	0	0	0	0	2	12	3.55
Minter, S, 6-8	1	1	1	1	0	1	17	8.56
New York	**IP**	**H**	**R**	**ER**	**BB**	**SO**	**NP**	**ERA**
Reyes, L, 0-1	1	5	5	5	1	1	37	6.14
Curtiss	2	1	1	1	0	0	24	4.38
Nogosek	2⅔	1	0	0	0	0	37	2.00
Brigham	1⅓	2	3	3	2	1	28	5.14
Hunter	2	0	0	0	0	4	25	6.30

T—2:53. **Tickets sold**—0 (42,136).

METS 5, BRAVES 3

Francisco Álvarez hit a go-ahead, two-run double in the sixth inning, and New York split a doubleheader after Atlanta star Ronald Acuña Jr. (bruised shoulder) exited the nightcap early.

Atlanta	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Acuña Jr. rf	0	0	0	0	.363
1-Pillar rf	3	0	0	0	.226
Grissom ss	0	0	0	0	.294
Olson 1b	3	1	0	0	.245
Riley 3b	4	0	1	0	.241
Murphy dh	3	1	2	0	.282
Rosario lf	3	0	1	3	.225
Albies 2b	4	0	1	0	.243
Hilliard cf-rf	4	0	0	0	.276
Adrianza ss	2	0	0	0	.000
a-Harris II cf	1	0	0	0	.207
Tromp c	4	1	1	0	.143
Totals	**31**	**3**	**6**	**3**	

New York	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Nimmo cf	4	0	1	0	.320
Marte rf	4	0	1	1	.226
Lindor ss	3	0	0	0	.215
Alonso 1b	4	0	0	0	.248
McNeil 2b	4	2	2	1	.304
Voglbch dh	3	1	1	1	.278
Canha lf	3	1	1	0	.225
Baty 3b	4	1	1	0	.333
Guillorme 3b	0	0	0	0	.233
Álvarez c	4	0	2	2	.225
Totals	**33**	**5**	**9**	**5**	

Atlanta	000	003	000 – 3	6	1
New York	010	012	01x – 5	9	0

a-walked for Adrianza in the 7th. 1-ran for Acuña Jr. in the 1st.
Walks—Atlanta 4: Olson 1, Murphy 1, Rosario 1, Harris II 1. New York 3: Lindor 1, Vogelbach 1, Canha 1. **Strikeouts**—Atlanta 10: Olson 1, Riley 1, Murphy 1, Rosario 2, Hilliard 3, Harris II 1, Tromp 1. New York 9: Nimmo 1, Marte 1, Lindor 1, Alonso 2, Vogelbach 1, Canha 1, Baty 1, Álvarez 1. **E**—Adrianza (1). **LOB**—Atlanta 6, New York 7. **2B**—Tromp (1), Rosario (4), Albies (3), Vogelbach (3), Baty (2), Álvarez (1). **HR**—McNeil (2), off Jiménez. **RBIs**—Rosario 3 (8), Vogelbach (11), Marte (8), Álvarez 2 (4), McNeil (10). **SB**—Lindor (4). **Runners left in scoring position**—Atlanta 3 (Albies, Adrianza, Tromp); New York 5 (Baty, Nimmo, Alonso 3). **RISP**—Atlanta 1 for 10; New York 3 for 11. **DP**—Atlanta 1 (Albies, Adrianza, Olson); New York 2 (Baty, McNeil, Alonso; McNeil, Lindor, Alonso).

Atlanta	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Morton, L, 3-3	5⅓	6	4	4	3	6	92	3.38
Tonkin, BS, 0-2	1⅓	1	0	0	0	1	17	2.25
Jiménez	1	2	1	1	0	2	28	3.00
New York	**IP**	**H**	**R**	**ER**	**BB**	**SO**	**NP**	**ERA**
Megill	5⅔	4	3	3	3	4	87	4.11
Smith, W, 2-1	1⅓	0	0	0	1	2	17	2.45
Robertson, S, 6-6	2	2	0	0	0	4	35	0.68

Inherited runners-scored—Tonkin 2-2, Smith 1-0. **HBP**—Megill (Acuña Jr.).
U—Junior Valentine, Adrian Johnson, Quinn Wolcott, Ryan Wills. **T**—2:32. **Tickets sold**—27,603 (42,136).

CUBS 5, NATIONALS 1

Dansby Swanson hit a two-run homer and Drew Smyly pitched seven solid innings as Chicago rebounded from a three-game sweep at Miami. Swanson finished with three hits. Dominic Smith had three of Washington's six hits.

Chicago	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Hoerner 2b	5	1	1	0	.323
Swanson ss	5	1	3	2	.301
Bellinger cf	4	1	1	0	.295
Suzuki rf	3	1	1	1	.258
Mancini 1b	4	0	1	1	.261
Wisdom dh	3	0	0	0	.242
Gomes c	1	0	0	0	.294
Barnhart c	3	0	1	0	.212
Velázqz lf	2	0	0	0	.318
Happ lf	2	1	2	1	.306
Madrigl 3b	4	0	0	0	.265
Totals	**36**	**5**	**10**	**5**	

Washington	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Call lf	4	0	0	0	.239
García 2b	4	0	2	0	.235
Candlrio 3b	4	0	0	0	.230
Meneses dh	4	0	0	0	.276
Ruiz c	4	0	0	0	.269
Thomas rf	3	1	1	1	.263
Smith 1b	3	0	3	0	.255
Robles cf	3	0	0	0	.268
Abrams ss	3	0	0	0	.217
Totals	**32**	**1**	**6**	**1**	

Chicago	200	020	001 – 5	10	0
Washington	010	000	000 – 1	6	1

Walks—Chicago 3: Bellinger 1, Suzuki 1, Wisdom 1.
Strikeouts—Chicago 8: Bellinger 1, Mancini 2, Wisdom 2, Gomes 1, Barnhart 1, Velázquez 1. Washington 5: Call 1, García 1, Candelario 1, Meneses 1, Abrams 1. **E**—Gore (1). **LOB**—Chicago 7, Washington 4. **2B**—Mancini (2), Swanson (4), Barnhart (1), García (3), Smith (2). **HR**—Swanson (2), off Gore; Happ (3), off Abbott; Thomas (1), off Smyly. **RBIs**—Suzuki (7), Mancini (15), Swanson 2 (9), Happ (15), Thomas (11). **SB**—Bellinger (5). **CS**—Happ (2). **Runners left in scoring position**—Chicago 3 (Madrigal, Wisdom, Mancini); Washington 2 (Candelario, Call). **RISP**—Chicago 2 for 7; Washington 0 for 4. **Runners moved up**—Velázquez. **GIDP**—Meneses. **DP**—Chicago 1 (Madrigal, Hoerner, Mancini).

Chicago	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Smyly, W, 3-1	7	6	1	1	0	2	84	2.83
Leiter Jr., H, 7	1	0	0	0	0	3	13	1.54
Boxberger	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	3.27
Washington	**IP**	**H**	**R**	**ER**	**BB**	**SO**	**NP**	**ERA**
Gore, L, 3-2	4	7	4	4	2	4	102	3.77
M.Thompson	1	0	0	0	0	2	13	1.80
Ward	2	1	0	0	0	1	28	3.97
Abbott	2	2	1	1	1	1	34	4.50

Inherited runners-scored—M.Thompson 1-0.
U—Brian Knight, Alex Tosi, Tony Randazzo, Todd Tichenor. **T**—2:29. **Tickets sold**—13,722 (41,376).

GUARDIANS 3, YANKEES 2

Josh Naylor hit a two-run single and Mike Zunino drew a go-ahead, bases-loaded walk in a three-run, ninth-inning rally for Cleveland. Domingo Germán took a one-hitter and a 2-0 lead into the ninth, but New York lost for the seventh time in its last nine games.

Cleveland	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Kwan lf	4	1	1	0	.278
Rosario ss	4	1	1	0	.228
Ramírez 3b	4	1	1	0	.279
Naylor 1b	4	0	1	2	.213
1-Arias 1b	0	0	0	0	.179
Bell dh	2	0	0	0	.202
2-Fry dh	0	0	0	0	---
Giménez 2b	4	0	0	0	.243
Zunino c	3	0	0	1	.230
Brennan rf	3	0	0	0	.200
a-Gonzlz rf	1	0	0	0	.174
Straw cf	3	0	0	0	.258
Totals	**32**	**3**	**4**	**3**	

New York	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Volpe ss	4	0	1	0	.219
Rizzo 1b	3	1	0	0	.274
Torres dh	4	0	1	0	.245
LeMahu 3b	4	0	2	1	.261
Calhoun rf	3	0	0	0	.220
Hicks lf	1	0	0	0	.156
Peraza 2b	3	0	1	0	.188
Kinr-Flfa cf	3	0	0	0	.189
Cabrera lf-rf	3	0	0	0	.193
Trevino c	3	1	1	1	.242
Totals	**31**	**2**	**6**	**2**	

Cleveland	000	000	003 – 3	4	0
New York	000	000	000 – 2	6	2

a-flied out for Brennan in the 9th. 1-ran for Naylor in the 9th. 2-ran for Bell in the 9th.
Walks—Cleveland 3: Bell 2, Zunino 1. New York 1: Rizzo 1. **Strikeouts**—Cleveland 7: Kwan 1, Naylor 1, Giménez 1, Zunino 3, Straw 1. New York 3: Volpe 1, LeMahieu 1, Hicks 1. **E**—Holmes (1), Cabrera (1). **LOB**—Cleveland 5, New York 3. **HR**—Trevino (3), off Quantrill. **RBIs**—Naylor 2 (17), Zunino (7), Trevino (9), LeMahieu (12). **Runners left in scoring position**—Cleveland 2 (Gonzalez 2); New York 1 (Calhoun). **RISP**—Cleveland 2 for 4; New York 1 for 2. LI
DP—Kiner-Falefa. **DP**—Cleveland 1 (Ramírez, Naylor, Ramírez).

Cleveland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	NP	ERA
Quantrill	7⅓	6	2	2	1	2	97	4.73
De Los Santos, W, 2-0	⅓	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.74
Clase, S, 10-12	1	0	0	0	0	1	12	1.76
New York	**IP**	**H**	**R**	**ER**	**BB**	**SO**	**NP**	**ERA**
Germán	8⅓	2	1	1	1	6	88	4.46
Holmes, L, 0-2, BS, 4-6	0.2	2	2	0	0	0	10	3.72
Peralta	⅔	0	0	0	2	1	19	2.53

Inherited runners-scored—De Los Santos 1-0, Holmes 1-1, Peralta 2-1.
U—Carlos Torres, Jansen Visconti, Cory Blaser, Clint Vondrak. **T**—2:06. **Tickets sold**—33,414 (47,309).

RED SOX 6, BLUE JAYS 5

Alex Verdugo smashed a leadoff homer in the ninth inning off Jordan Romano for his third walk-off hit this season, and Boston beat Toronto to end a nine-game skid to the Blue Jays.

Toronto	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Bichette ss	5	1	5	3	.344
Guerrero dh	5	0	1	0	.304
Chapman 3b	4	0	1	0	.379
Varsho lf	4	0	0	0	.186
Merrifld 2b	4	0	1	0	.316
Belt 1b	3	0	0	0	.161
a-Kirk	1	0	0	0	.270
Lukes rf	1	0	0	0	.000
D.Jansen c	3	1	0	0	.169
Biggio rf/1b	4	1	1	0	.122
Kiermr cf	3	2	0	0	.263
Totals	**37**	**5**	**9**	**3**	

Boston	AB	R	H	BI	Avg.
Verdugo rf	5	2	2	1	.311
Yoshida lf	4	1	2	1	.286
Turner dh	4	0	1	1	.259
Devers 3b	3	0	1	0	.235
Duran cf	4	1	2	1	.404
Herndz ss	4	0	1	0	.245
1-Tapia	0	0	0	0	.231
Arroyo ss	0	0	0	0	.246
Casas 1b	3	1	0	0	.128
Valdez 2b	4	1	2	2	.333
McGuire c	4	0	2	0	.327
Totals	**35**	**6**	**13**	**6**	

Derby favorite Forte gets midpack starting spot

He avoids the inside in a mostly drama-free draw. Practical Move (10-1) is fourth favorite.

By John Cherwa

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — If you were to ask the trainers, the draw for the Kentucky Derby really is not as big of a deal as everyone seems to make it. To a person they can be expected to say that they like the draw they got, even though they are selling more of a concept of confidence than anything else.

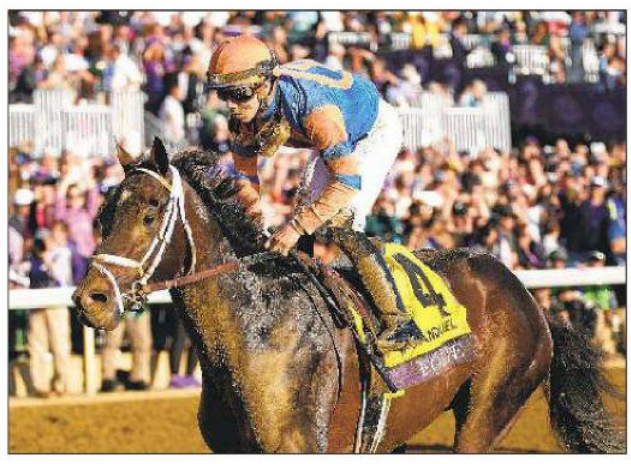
Monday's blind pulling of post positions and names of horses didn't have a lot of drama although Todd Pletcher and Brad Cox have four of the six less-attractive inside positions. Pletcher has three horses in the race, including the 3-1 morning-line favorite Forte, who is in a decent spot in the 15 post. Cox has four horses, including third favorite Angel Of Empire (8-1), who will break from the 14.

"It's OK," Cox said about Hit Show (30-1) drawing the 1 and Verifying (15-1) being handed the 2. "We'll live with it, we have to. Manny [Franco, Hit Show's jockey] is obviously going to have to work out a trip from down in there. Same thing with Verifying. Both riders are going to have to find a way into the first turn."

The inside posts are not as bad as they used to be since Churchill Downs constructed a single 20-horse starting gate in 2020. In the past there was a gap between the main gate of 14 horses and an auxiliary gate of six horses. The extra width, including the space between the two gates, squeezed the horses on the inside closer to the rail.

"We've got the tighter starting gate; it works out well for the Derby," Cox said. "I don't think it eliminates the inside horses like it used to with the auxiliary gate. So, I'm going to take a positive spin on it and hope Hit Show and Verifying can get good trips from inside."

The winner of the Santa Anita Derby usually is considered one of the top picks for the Kentucky Derby. But Practical Move was put at 10-1, the fourth favorite, tied with Derma Sotogake, winner of the UAE Derby. The winner of the race in Dubai never has finished in the top three in the Kentucky Derby.



Jeff Roberson Associated Press

FORTE runs to victory at the Breeders' Cup Juvenile race last November, with jockey Irad Ortiz Jr.

Practical Move and Reincarnate (50-1) both are trained by Santa Anita-based Tim Yakteen.

Practical Move is nicely placed in the 10, a good spot for a horse that runs just off the pace, and Reincarnate is the 7.

The only other Southern California horse in the race is Skinner (20-1), who made the race after Wild On Ice was injured during training and had to be euthanized. Skinner will break just inside Practical Move in the 9.

Yakteen and Skinner's trainer, John Shirreffs, who won the Derby in 2005 with long shot Giacomo, were nothing if not brief in their assessment of the draw.

"Do I like them?" Yakteen asked. "Yes."

Shirreffs said: "Thumbs up. It's a good draw."

Mandarin Hero, second in the Santa Anita Derby, is still on the outside looking in.

Two horses have to scratch before 9 a.m. Friday for him to make the field.

Kentucky Derby lineup

Post time: Saturday, 3:45 p.m. PDT. **TV:** 11:30 a.m.-4:15 p.m., Ch. 4.
Lineup: In post-position order with morning line odds.

PP	Horse	Jockey	Trainer	Odds
1	Hit Show	Brad Cox	Manny Franco	30-1
2	Verifying	Brad Cox	Tyler Gaffalione	15-1
3	Two Phil's	Larry Rivelli	Jareth Loveberry	12-1
4	Confidence Game	Keith Desormeaux	James Graham	20-1
5	Tapit Trice	Todd Pletcher	Luis Sáez	5-1
6	Kingsbarns	Todd Pletcher	José Ortiz	12-1
7	Reincarnate	Tim Yakteen	John Velázquez	50-1
8	Mage	Gustavo Delgado	Javier Castellano	15-1
9	Skinner	John Shirreffs	Juan Hernández	20-1
10	Practical Move	Tim Yakteen	Ramón Vázquez	10-1
11	Disarm	Steve Asmussen	Joel Rosario	30-1
12	Jace's Road	Brad Cox	Florent Geroux	15-1
13	Sun Thunder	Kenny McPeek	Brian Hernandez Jr.	50-1
14	Angel Of Empire	Brad Cox	Flavien Prat	8-1
15	Forte	Todd Pletcher	Irad Ortiz Jr.	3-1
16	Raise Cain	Ben Colebrook	Gerardo Corrales	50-1
17	Derma Sotogake	Hidetaka Otonashi	Christophe Lemaire	10-1
18	Rocket Can	Bill Mott	Júnior Alvarado	30-1
19	Lord Miles	Saffie Joseph Jr.	Paco López	30-1
20	Continuar	Yoshito Yahagi	Ryusei Sakai	50-1
	ALSO ELIGIBLE			
	Cyclone Mischief	Dale Romans	Joel Rosario	30-1
	Mandarin Hero	Terunobu Fujita	Kazushi Kimura	20-1
	King Russell	Ron Moquett	Rafael Bejarano	50-1

NBA PLAYOFFS

Harden, 76ers topple Celtics

ASSOCIATED PRESS

James Harden was asked for most of this season to be a facilitator for a Philadelphia 76ers team built around big man Joel Embiid.

With the most-valuable-player finalist sidelined for the opener of his team's second-round playoff series with the Boston Celtics, Philadelphia called on a vintage version of Harden.

He happily obliged.

Harden matched his playoff career high with 45 points and hit a go-ahead, step-back three-pointer over Al Horford with 8.7 seconds left as the 76ers rallied without Embiid to beat host Boston 119-115 in Game 1 of the Eastern Conference semifinals Monday night.

"We didn't come into the game expecting to lose. We came in here to win," Harden said. "Whether Jo comes back or not, we're going to be ready to go."

Tyrese Maxey added 26 points and Tobias Harris finished with 18 for the 76ers, who made 17 three-pointers with Embiid watching from the bench. He sprained his right knee in Game 3 of Philadelphia's first-round sweep of the Brooklyn Nets.

After the 76ers endured an early scoring onslaught from the Celtics, coach Doc Rivers said Harden was patient and knew when to attack and when to pass.

"That's the difference between this year's team and last year's team. We have a bunch of street fighters," Rivers said. "If we could get to the fourth quarter, we were going to win the game. That's how we felt."

Charles Krupa Associated Press

JAMES HARDEN, who tied his playoff career high with 45 points, drives against Celtics forward Jayson Tatum in the first half of the 76ers' 119-115 win in Game 1.

Denver 97, Phoenix 87

PHOENIX

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Durant	44	10-27	2-2	1-8	3	4	24
Okogie	21	1-3	0-0	0-0	1	3	2
Ayton	33	7-10	0-0	4-8	4	5	14
Booker	44	14-29	3-3	0-5	6	4	35
Paul	25	4-10	0-0	1-5	6	0	8
Lee	25	0-5	0-0	3-6	2	1	0
Payne	16	1-7	0-0	0-1	1	4	2
Craig	11	0-2	0-0	1-1	0	0	0
Biyombo	9	1-2	0-0	0-4	0	3	2
Landale	5	0-0	0-0	1-1	0	0	0
Wainright	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Totals	**38-95**		**5-5**	**11-39**	**23**	**25**	**87**

Shooting: Field goals, 40.0%; free throws, 0.0%
Three-point goals: 6-31 (Booker 4-8, Durant 2-12, Craig 0-2, Okogie 0-2, Lee 0-3, Payne 0-4). Team Rebounds: 10. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 4 (Durant 2, Ayton, Payne). Turnovers: 9 (Ayton 4, Booker 2, Durant 2, Biyombo). Steals: 2 (Durant, Landale). Technical Fouls: None.

DENVER

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Gordon	39	5-8	5-6	0-1	1	2	16
Porter Jr.	23	2-7	1-1	0-4	1	0	5
Jokic	41	17-30	3-4	3-16	5	2	39
Caldwell-Pope	41	5-6	0-0	2-5	2	2	14
Murray	39	3-15	4-4	0-4	8	0	10
Brown	24	2-5	5-6	0-4	1	4	9
Braun	15	1-2	0-0	0-3	0	3	2
Green	15	1-3	0-0	0-4	1	3	2
Totals	**36-76**		**18-21**	**5-41**	**19**	**16**	**97**

Shooting: Field goals, 47.4%; free throws, 85.7%
Three-point goals: 7-27 (Caldwell-Pope 4-4, Jokic 2-6, Gordon 1-3, Brown 0-1, Green 0-2, Porter Jr. 0-2, Murray 0-9). Team Rebounds: 10. Team Turnovers: 3. Blocked Shots: 6 (Green 2, Brown, Gordon, Jokic, Porter Jr.). Turnovers: 10 (Jokic 3, Murray 3, Gordon 2, Caldwell-Pope, Green). Steals: 5 (Gordon 2, Jokic 2, Caldwell-Pope). Technical Fouls: None.

Phoenix	**21**	**21**	**31**	**14– 87**
Denver	**18**	**22**	**30**	**27– 97**

A–19,592. T–2:17.

Philadelphia 119, Boston 115

PHILADELPHIA

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Harris	41	8-16	0-0	0-5	3	1	18
Tucker	36	0-0	0-0	2-5	1	4	0
Reed	37	3-4	4-4	4-13	2	4	10
Harden	39	17-30	4-4	0-1	6	4	45
Maxey	35	10-24	4-4	0-1	2	5	26
Melton	24	6-10	0-0	1-1	2	2	17
Niang	13	1-3	0-0	0-1	1	0	3
McDaniels	11	0-2	0-0	1-1	0	0	0
Totals	**45-89**		**12-12**	**8-28**	**17**	**20**	**119**

Shooting: Field goals, 50.6%; free throws, 0.0%
Three-point goals: 17-38 (Harden 7-14, Melton 5-6, Harris 2-5, Maxey 2-9, Niang 1-3, McDaniels 0-1). Team Rebounds: 8. Team Turnovers: 2. Blocked Shots: 4 (Melton 2, Harris, Reed). Turnovers: 6 (Harden 3, Melton, Niang, Tucker). Steals: 10 (Maxey 4, Harden 2, Tucker 2, Harris, Reed). Technical Fouls: None.

BOSTON

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Brown	41	8-10	4-4	1-6	4	1	23
Tatum	43	14-25	7-8	2-11	5	2	39
Horford	30	5-8	0-0	3-6	3	0	11
Smart	35	4-7	4-4	1-3	7	3	12
White	27	1-5	2-2	0-2	3	2	4
Brogdon	33	9-16	0-0	1-3	3	1	20
Williams III	19	3-3	0-0	0-7	0	1	6
Hauser	4	0-1	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Williams	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals	**44-75**		**17-18**	**8-38**	**26**	**10**	**115**

Shooting: Field goals, 58.7%; free throws, 94.4%
Three-point goals: 10-26 (Tatum 4-5, Brown 3-4, Brogdon 2-6, Horford 1-4, Hauser 0-1, Smart 0-2, White 0-4). Team Rebounds: 2. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 4 (Horford 3, Tatum). Turnovers: 16 (Smart 6, Brown 4, Horford 2, White 2, Brogdon, Tatum). Steals: 3 (Brown, Tatum, White). Technical Fouls: None.

Philadelphia	**31**	**32**	**24**	**32–119**
Boston	**38**	**28**	**21**	**28–115**

A–19,156. T–2:16.

Schmid, Devils advance

Goalie blanks Rangers again, in Game 7, to reach second round against Hurricanes.

NEW JERSEY 4
N.Y. RANGERS 0

WIRE REPORTS

NEWARK, N.J. — Unexpected hero Akira Schmid rebounded from his only bad game and made 31 saves in Game 7 to lead the New Jersey Devils to a 4-0 victory over the New York Rangers on Monday night in an entertaining first-round playoff series.

Michael McLeod and Tomas Tatar scored second-period goals in the deciding game between the longtime Hudson River rivals.

With their first playoff series win since 2012, the Devils will open the Eastern Conference semifinals on Wednesday at the Carolina Hurricanes.

Igor Shesterkin was outstanding in defeat, stopping 20 shots, including Jack Hughes' breakaway late in a scoreless first period.

Schmid, who had played in only 24 regular season games, was the difference in this series, posting two shutouts. After New York had a pair of 5-1 wins in the opening two games against starter Vitek Vanecek, Devils coach Lindy Ruff switched to the 22-year-old Swiss netminder.

Over the next five games, Schmid went 4-1, including a 4-0 shutout in Game 5. He was driven from the net in Game 6 but delivered in Game 7. Schmid stopped a pair of Mike Zibanejad power-play blasts in the first period and made a great glove save on Vincent Trocheck with the score still 2-0.

The Devils got a scare early in the third period when forward Timo Meier took a hard, open-ice hit from defenseman Jacob Trouba and remained prone for several moments.

NHL PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

WESTERN CONFERENCE SECOND ROUND

WC1 Seattle vs. C2 Dallas

Gm 1	Tonight at Dallas, 6:30
Gm 2	Thursday at Dallas, 6:30
Gm 3	at Seattle, TBD
Gm 4	at Seattle, TBD
Gm 5	at Dallas, TBD *
Gm 6	at Seattle, TBD*
Gm 7	at Dallas, TBD*

P2 Edmonton vs. P1 Vegas

Gm 1	Wednesday at Vegas, 6:30
Gm 2	Friday at Vegas, TBD
Gm 3	at Edmonton, TBD
Gm 4	at Edmonton, TBD
Gm 5	at Vegas, TBD*
Gm 6	at Edmonton, TBD*
Gm 7	at Vegas, TBD*

EASTERN CONFERENCE FIRST ROUND

M2 New Jersey vs. M3 Rangers
Devils win series 4-3

Gm 1	New York 5, New Jersey 1
Gm 2	New York 5, New Jersey 1
Gm 3	New Jersey 2, N.Y. 1 (OT)
Gm 4	New Jersey 3, New York 1
Gm 5	New Jersey 4, New York 0
Gm 6	New York, 5, New Jersey 2
Gm 7	New Jersey 4, New York 0

SECOND ROUND

A2 Toronto vs. WC2 Florida

Gm 1	Today at Toronto, 4
Gm 2	Thursday at Toronto, 4
Gm 3	at Florida, TBD
Gm 4	at Florida, TBD
Gm 5	at Toronto, TBD*
Gm 6	at Florida, TBD*
Gm 7	at Toronto, TBD*

M1 Carolina vs. M2 New Jersey

Gm 1	Wednesday at Carolina, 4
Gm 2	Friday at Carolina, TBD
Gm 3	at New Jersey, TBD
Gm 4	at New Jersey, TBD
Gm 5	at Carolina, TBD*
Gm 6	at New Jersey, TBD*
Gm7	at Carolina, TBD*

* if necessary

All times PDT, p.m. unless noted

Devils 4, Rangers 0

N.Y. Rangers	0	0	0	– 0
New Jersey	0	2	2	– 4

FIRST PERIOD: Scoring—None. **Penalties**—Bastian, N.J. (Tripping), 2:33. Fox, N.Y.R (Holding), 3:07. Severson, N.J. (Tripping), 11:44. Bahl, N.J. (Delay of Game), 14:02.

SECOND PERIOD: 1. N.J., McLeod 1 (Palat), 9:53 (sh). 2. N.J., Tatar 1 (Marino, Hischier), 15:39. **Penalties**—Miller, N.Y.R (High Sticking), 7:46. Bratt, N.J. (Tripping), 8:57.

THIRD PERIOD: 3. N.J., Haula 4 (J.Hughes, Palat), 14:27. 4. N.J., Bratt 1 (Marino), 16:41 (en). **Penalties**—Miller, N.Y.R (Roughing), 5:03.

SHOTS ON GOAL: N.Y. Rangers 6-12-13—31. N.J. 7-11-6—24. Power-play Conversions—N.Y. Rangers 0 of 4. N.J. 0 of 3.

GOALIES: N.Y. Rangers, Shesterkin 3-4-0 (23 shots-20 saves). N.J., Schmid 4-1-0 (31-31). Att—17,241 (16,514). T—2:26. R—Gord Dwyer, Wes McCauley. L—Scott Cherrey, Bevan Mills.

James, Curry headline the playoff series

[**Lakers,** from B10]

They're right there at the top along with some of those great San Antonio Spurs teams where you just — if you make a mistake, they make you pay.

"It's that simple."

The Lakers will need a big series from Anthony Davis and need to adjust from Memphis' interior attack to Golden State's perimeter attack. And they'll face a team with championship experience, the Warriors having won their fourth title in eight seasons last year.

Guard Austin Reaves said James' depth of knowledge on the Warriors is a weapon for the Lakers.

"He's definitely been vocal. I mean, honestly, anytime he talks, whatever team, you lock in, you listen," Reaves said. "Because obviously he's been around for a long time and seen everything. But especially with this team, they've had wars together. So he knows the ins and outs of what it takes to be successful against them. So anytime he talks, everybody is locked in."

NBA PLAYOFF SCHEDULE

WESTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

1 Denver vs. 4 Phoenix
Nuggets lead series 2-0

Gm 1	Denver 125, Phoenix 107
Gm 2	Denver 97, Phoenix 87
Gm 3	Friday at Phoenix, 7 p.m.
Gm 4	Sunday at Phoenix, 7 p.m.
Gm 5	May 9 at Denver, TBD*
Gm 6	May 11 at Phoenix, TBD*
Gm 7	May 14 at Denver, TBD*

6 Golden State vs. 7 LAKERS
Best-of-seven series

Gm 1	Tonight at G.S., 7 p.m.
Gm 2	Thurs. at Golden St., 6 p.m.
Gm 3	Sat. at LAKERS, 5:30 p.m.
Gm 4	Monday at LAKERS, 7 p.m.
Gm 5	May 10 at Golden St., TBD*
Gm 6	May 12 at LAKERS, TBD*
Gm 7	May 14 at Golden St., TBD*

All times PDT, unless noted

EASTERN CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

2 Boston vs. 3 Philadelphia
76ers lead series 1-0

Gm 1	Phila. 119, Boston 115
Gm 2	Wed. at Boston, 5 p.m.
Gm 3	Friday at Phila., 4:30 p.m.
Gm 4	Sunday at Phila., 12:30 p.m.
Gm 5	May 9 at Boston, TBD*
Gm 6	May 11 at Phila., TBD*
Gm 7	May 14 at Boston, TBD*

5 New York vs. 8 Miami
Heat lead series 1-0

Gm 1	Heat 108, Knicks 101
Gm 2	Today at N.Y., 4:30 p.m.
Gm 3	Sat. at Miami, 12:30 p.m.
Gm 4	Mon. at Miami, 4:30 p.m.
Gm 5	May 10 at New York, TBD*
Gm 6	May 12 at Miami, TBD*
Gm 7	May 15 at New York, TBD*

* if necessary

The Lakers beat the Warriors three times this season, though key players were missing in each meeting. The lone loss came in the season opener, when the Lakers were a wildly different team. Of the nine leaders in minutes in the opener, only four are still on the team, and one, Lonnie Walker IV, is out of the playoff rotation.

Reaves, now a starter, played fewer minutes than Kendrick Nunn and Matt Ryan on opening night.

"Every team is better than they were opening night. And that includes us and the Warriors," James said.

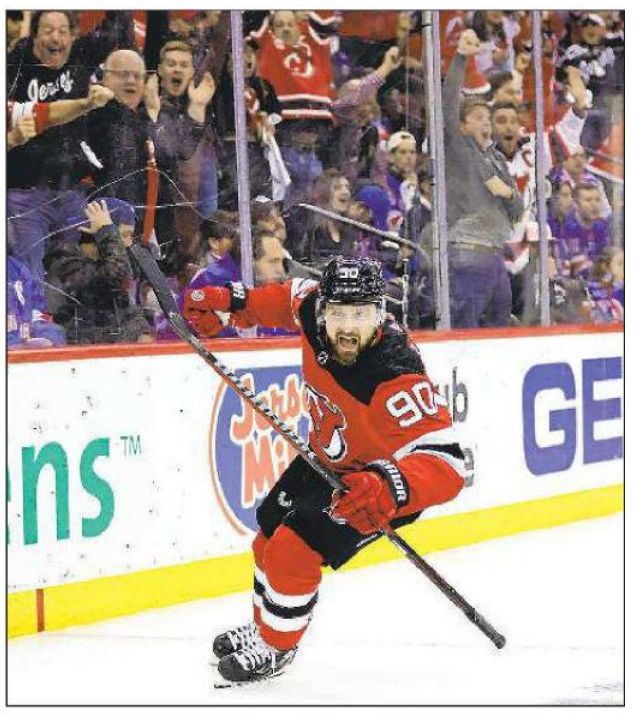
"We both feel like we're a better team. A playoff series, to be able to see what you're capable of, helps that. You see ways that you can bounce back from a little adversity here, a little adversity there. But obviously we're a better team than we were on opening night. That goes without saying."

It also goes without saying that James is where he wants to be, in the spotlight with a team that has a real opportunity for a run in the postseason on the eve of a massive test against an old rival.

James' all-business demeanor finally broke, with him picking up the ball and flipping up a hook shot from beyond half court. The ball ripped through the net, Davis looking shocked.

As far as omens go, this was a pretty good sign.

"Not bad," James said. "Not bad."



Adam Hunger Associated Press

TOMAS TATAR scored in the second period to help the Devils win their first playoff series since 2012.

LAFC aims for another shot at winning celebrated crown

Team can make final again in CONCACAF Champions League after 2020 heartbreak.

KEVIN BAXTER
ON SOCCER

RINGO H.W. CHIU Associated Press

CARLOS VELA and LAFC host Philadelphia tonight in the second leg of a CCL semifinal. The teams tied 1-1 last week, and aggregate goals decide the winner.

John Thorrington has been here before, a result away from seeing his team reach the final of the region's most prestigious club competition. But while the situation feels familiar, everything is different too.

"The world is in a different place. Which meant for a very different experience," said LAFC's co-president and general manager, whose team will meet the Philadelphia Union in the second leg of a CONCACAF Champions League semifinal matchup Tuesday night.

The last time LAFC played in the CCL semifinals, in 2020, the world had been shut down by the COVID-19 pandemic. The tournament, traditionally played during the spring in a two-leg, home-and-away format, was paused for nine months before finishing in December with single-elimination games played behind closed doors in Orlando, Fla.

Despite the obstacles, LAFC made it to the final and led with less than 20 minutes to play before two late goals gave Tigres UANL a 2-1 victory. Would the result have been different if the final had been played in May, when Bradley Wright-Phillips, LAFC's second-leading goal scorer, was still with the team? Would it have been different if one game had been played before LAFC's rabid supporters in its sold-out Exposition Park fortress rather than in an empty, silent stadium 2,500 miles away?

"We'll never know," Thorrington said. "That was such a weird and thankfully unique period for all of us. That whole season, we were without our fans. And we certainly were affected by that.

"It's hard to say what I do regret. First of all, I was really grateful we could have the tournament at all. But if I were to look back and be somewhat picky, it would have just been amazing to think about those teams that we played. To play Cruz Azul, then to play América and then play Tigres in two-legged [series] would have been absolutely incredible."

LAFC will be at home Tuesday, when it will meet the Union in the second game of this year's CCL semifinals with a chance to become the first MLS team this century to reach the final twice. The winner will be decided on aggregate goals over the playoff's two legs, and with away goals serving as the first tiebreaker, LAFC has a slight edge after last week's 1-1 draw in Chester, Pa.

Winning or holding Philadelphia scoreless in the rematch will send LAFC on, but beyond that things become complicated. Another 1-1 draw, for example, would send the game to penalty kicks, which is how last fall's epic MLS Cup final between LAFC and the Union, won by LAFC, was decided.

"Odds are we'll never see what happened in November ever again," Thorrington said. "But I suppose that's what's great about sports: You never know."

A 2-2 draw, meanwhile, would allow Philadelphia to advance on the away-goals tiebreaker.

Only four players remain from the lineup that started for LAFC in its 3-1 CCL semifinal win over Club América in 2020. And only four others remain from the players on the bench that day. The coaching staff is completely different as well.

But Thorrington, who built an expansion LAFC team into a Supporters' Shield winner and CCL finalist in its first three seasons, did a masterful job of rebuilding in 2021 and 2022.

"It's difficult for an expansion team to not go through these cycles," said Thorrington, the only general manager to lead an expansion team to Major League Soccer's best record twice in its first five seasons. "Because a lot of your new players are on four-year contracts, you do end up hitting this cycle where you have to either re-sign, sell, move players on. So it goes through this natural cycle.

"It wasn't like a revolution was needed. We tweaked things, [and] we kept a lot of things that we felt are always going to be a part of our DNA. There was turnover with staff, which we hadn't dealt with before. I think we were all pleasantly surprised by how that continuity helped us start off quicker than maybe we would have expected with the amount of change."

So which team is better? The one that won a Supporters' Shield in 2019 and made the CCL final a year later? Or the one that won a Supporters' Shield and MLS Cup in 2022 and is playing in the CCL semifinals a year later?

"So many people ask me that question," Thorrington said with a chuckle. "I think this team is deeper. I think this team has more options and ways in which we [can be] successful, whether that's defending, our goalkeeping, our depth and [how] we can find ways to win games."

Maybe. But the 2020 COVID-era team made it to the CCL final. This year's team still has one more hurdle to clear to match that.

You have read the latest installment of On Soccer with Kevin Baxter. The weekly column takes you behind the scenes and shines a spotlight on unique stories. Look for it every Tuesday morning at latimes.com/soccer. Listen to Baxter on this week's episode of the Corner of the Galaxy podcast.

PRO CALENDAR

	TUE 2	WED 3	THU 4	FRI 5	SAT 6
DODGERS	**PHILA.** 7 SNLA	**PHILA.** 1 SNLA		**at San Diego** 6:30 SNLA	**at San Diego** 5:30 SNLA
ANGELS	**at St. Louis** 4:45 BSW	**at St. Louis** 4:45 BSW	**at St. Louis** 10:15 a.m. BSW	**TEXAS** 6:30 BSW	**TEXAS** 6 BSW
LAKERS	**at Golden State*** 7 TNT		**at Golden State*** 6 ESPN		**GOLDEN ST.*** 5:30 Ch. 7
GALAXY					**COLORADO** 7:30 Apple TV
LAFC	**PHILA.**** 7 FS1				**at San Jose** 4:30 Apple TV
ANGEL CITY		**at OL Reign***** 7 Paramount+			

Shade denotes home game.

*NBA playoffs **CONCACAF Champions League ***NWSL Challenge Cup

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASEBALL		
4 p.m.	Toronto at Boston	**TV:** TBS
4:30 p.m.	Angels at St. Louis	**TV:** BSW **R:** 830
7 p.m.	Philadelphia at Dodgers	**TV:** SNLA **R:** 570, 1020
7 p.m.	Cincinnati at San Diego (joined in progress)	**TV:** MLB
BASKETBALL: NBA PLAYOFFS, SECOND ROUND		
4:30 p.m.	Miami at New York, Game 1	**TV:** TNT
7 p.m.	Lakers at Golden State, Game 1	**TV:** TNT **R:** 710
COLLEGE BASEBALL		
4 p.m.	Kansas at Missouri	**TV:** SEC
GOLF		
1 p.m.	PGA Professional Championship, third round	**TV:** Golf
HOCKEY: STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS, SECOND ROUND		
4 p.m.	Florida at Toronto, Game 1	**TV:** ESPN
6:30 p.m.	Seattle at Dallas, Game 1	**TV:** ESPN
HORSE RACING		
9:30 a.m.	America's Day at the Races	**TV:** FS2
PREP LACROSSE		
4 p.m.	Georgetown Prep (Md.) at Bullis School (Md.)	**TV:** ESPNU
SOCCER		
10:30 a.m.	Spain, Osasuna at Barcelona	**TV:** ESPND
11:45 a.m.	German Cup, Leipzig at Freiberg	**TV:** ESPNU
Noon	England, Chelsea at Arsenal	**TV:** USA
1 p.m.	Spain, Real Madrid at Real Sociedad	**TV:** ESPND
3 p.m.	Copa Libertadores, Argentinos Juniors at Liverpool	**TV:** beIN1, beINes
5 p.m.	Copa Libertadores, River Plate at Fluminense	**TV:** beIN1, beINes
7 p.m.	CONCACAF Champions League, Philadelphia at LAFC	**TV:** FS1, KFTR, UniMas **R:** 1330
7 p.m.	Copa Libertadores, The Strongest at Sporting Cristal	**TV:** beIN1, beINes
TENNIS		
5 a.m.	Madrid Open, women's quarterfinals; men's fourth round	**TV:** BSW, Tennis
10 a.m.	Madrid Open, women's quarterfinals; men's fourth round	**TV:** Tennis

E-NEWSPAPER BONUS

Subscribers get free access to the daily digital replica of The Times print edition that now includes one bonus sports page. To view the e-newspaper on your phone, tablet or computer, visit *latimes.com/enewspaper*.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Calgary fires coach Sutter

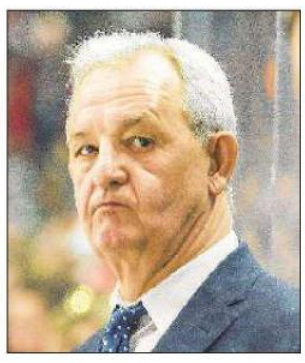
STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The Calgary Flames started the 2022-23 season making a long-term commitment to coach **Darryl Sutter**, and ended it looking for a different voice behind the bench.

The Flames fired Sutter on Monday in the latest major change at the NHL club after a disappointing season. Sutter's dismissal comes 11 months after he won the Jack Adams Award as the NHL's top coach. He also coached the Kings to Stanley Cup titles in 2012 and 2014.

One year after winning the Pacific Division and advancing to the second round of the Stanley Cup playoffs, the Flames fell to fifth in the division and missed the postseason with a 38-27-17 record.

Minnesota Wild center **Joel Eriksson Ek,** whose participation in the first-round NHL playoff series loss to Dallas was limited to one shift, was trying to play with a broken left leg that required surgery.



ANDY CLAYTON-KING AP

CALGARY fired coach Darryl Sutter after missing the playoffs this year.

season, also an impact of the changes. Stolen bases rose 40% to their highest level in nearly a quarter-century and scoring increased by 1.1 runs per game. Pitch clock violations averaged 0.74, and the New York Mets topped the major leagues with 17 while the Dodgers tied for the fewest with four.

Philadelphia Phillies slugger **Bryce Harper** is expected to return to the lineup Tuesday, 160 days after undergoing Tommy John surgery on his right elbow. ... New York Yankees captain **Aaron Judge** went on the injured list because of a strained right hip and right-hander **Jonathan Loáisiga** will have arthroscopic surgery to remove a bone spur from his pitching elbow. ... Houston Astros right-hander **José Urquidy** was placed on the 15-day IL with a sore right shoulder. ... Toronto Blue Jays right fielder **George Springer** was a late scratch from the lineup against the Boston Red Sox because of illness. ... The San Francisco Giants placed shortstop **Brandon Crawford** and outfielder **Mike Yastrzemski** on the 10-day IL.

Serena Williams, who stepped away from tennis, in part, to expand her family, announced her pregnancy during an interview at the Met Gala. ... Second-seeded **Aryna Sabalenka** advanced to the quarterfinals after ending Russian teenager **Mirra Andreeva's** impressive run at the Madrid Open.

Martin Truex Jr. won at the Monster Mile on a Monday for the third time in his career, snapping a 54-race winless streak in the NASCAR Cup Series at Dover (Del.) Motor Speedway.

The New York Jets signed offensive lineman **Billy Turner**, who'll be reunited with quarterback **Aaron Rodgers** and offensive coordinator **Nathaniel Hackett**.

Two days after selecting 14 players in the NFL draft, the Rams added 24 undrafted free agents to the roster. Tennessee-Martin quarterback **Dresser Winn** was among the players.

— GARY KLEIN

TENNIS RESULTS

$8.5-MILLION MADRID OPEN
At Madrid
Surface: Red clay

MEN'S SINGLES (round of 32)—Daniil Medvedev (2), Russia, d. Alexander Shevchenko, Russia, 4-6, 6-1, 7-5. Jan-Lennard Struff, Germany, d. Dusan Lajovic, Serbia, 6-7 (2), 6-3, 6-3. Aslan Karatsev, Russia, d. Alex de Minaur (16), Australia, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. Pedro Cachin, Argentina, d. Frances Tiafoe (9), U.S., 6-1, 7-6 (2). Bernabe Zapata Miralles, Spain, d. Roman Safiullin, Russia, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3. Taylor Fritz (8), U.S., d. Cristian Garin, Chile, 6-1, 7-6 (4). Stefanos Tsitsipas (4), Greece, d. Sebastian Baez (25), Argentina, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3. Zhang Zhizhen, China, d. Cameron Norrie (11), Britain, 2-6, 7-6 (2), 7-6 (2).

WOMEN'S SINGLES (round of 32)—Irina-Camelia Begu (31), Romania, d. Liudmila Samsonova (14), Russia, 6-4, 6-4. Mayar Sherif, Egypt, d. Elise Mertens (24), Belgium, 6-4, 0-6, 6-4. Aryna Sabalenka (2), Belarus, d. Mirra Andreeva, Russia, 6-3, 6-1.Maria Sakkari (9), Greece, d. Paula Badosa (26), Spain, 6-4, 6-4. Veronika Kudermetova (12), Russia, d. Daria Kasatkina (8), Russia, 7-5, 1-6, 7-6 (2). Petra Martic (27), Croatia, d. Barbora Krejcikova (11), Czech Republic, 6-3, 7-6 (1). Jessica Pegula (3), U.S. d. Martina Trevisan (18), Italy, 6-3, 2-6, 6-3. Iga Swiatek (1), Poland, d. Ekaterina Alexandrova (16), Russia, 6-4, 6-7 (3), 6-3.

ETC.

MLB changes yielding results

Baseball's offseason rules changes have produced, with the biggest example being game times. The average time of a nine-inning game is 2 hours 37 minutes, down from 3:05 at the same point last year.

Batting average for left-handed hitters was up 13 percentage points through the first full month of the

Notre Dame receives No. 1 seed for Division 1 playoffs

Knights (26-2) open baseball postseason on Thursday at home against Newhall Hart.

BY ERIC SONDHEIMER

Nearly 40 years ago, Sherman Oaks Notre Dame High had one of the best high school baseball teams in CIF Southern Section history. Led by future Cy Young Award winner Jack McDowell, the Knights won their first 27 games in 1984 before losing to Long Beach Millikan in the Division 1 semifinals.

Now, the Knights are 26-2 and were seeded No. 1 for the Division 1 playoffs on Monday. They will open at home against Newhall Hart on Thursday.

"We're playing good baseball," coach Tom Dill said.

Dill, however, knows how challenging it is to win the Division 1 title in a single-elimination tournament loaded with standout pitchers. The good news for Notre Dame is that its pitching staff has been outstanding, led by starters Justin Lee (UCLA commit) and Oliver Boone (California) and relievers Levi Sterling and Erik Puodziunas. Sam Petrocelli has been a third starter.

Orange Lutheran and Santa Ana Foothill made the 32-team Division 1 bracket as at-large teams, something that doesn't always happen. Fortunately for them, there were only 30 automatic qualifiers.

If Notre Dame wins its opener Thursday, it could be facing a second-round matchup against a La Verne Bonita team that has two top pitchers in Justin Santiago and Garrett Patterson. But that's the challenge of Division 1 — teams are loaded with top pitchers.

Huntington Beach, with its outstanding hitting attack, will face one of the top young pitchers in Downey Warren sophomore Angel Cervantes, a UCLA commit.

Santa Margarita is seeded No. 2, Huntington Beach No. 3 and San Juan Capistrano JSerra No. 4.

San Bernardino Aquinas received the No. 1 seed for Division 2. Santa Ana Mater Dei earned its first playoff berth since 2017 and opens at home Friday against Westlake Village Oaks Christian in another Division 2 game.

PREP BASEBALL PAIRINGS

SOUTHERN SECTION
DIVISION 1
First round, Thursday, 3:15 p.m. unless noted

Hart at No. 1 Sherman Oaks Notre Dame; Bonita at Arcadia (Wednesday); El Dorado at San Dimas; Rancho Cucamonga at Corona; Mira Costa at Cypress; Sierra Canyon at Bishop Amat; Capistrano Valley at Etiwanda; No. 4 JSerra at Yucaipa.

Warren at No. 3 Huntington Beach; Damien at Villa Park; Orange Lutheran at Arlington (Wednesday); Harvard-Westlake at Palos Verdes; Ayala vs. La Mirada at Glenn; Garden Grove Pacifica at Torrance; Millikan at Maranatha; Foothill at No. 2 Santa Margarita.

DIVISION 2
Wild-card games, Wednesday, 3:15 p.m.

A—Dos Pueblos at Moorpark; B—Northview at Citrus Valley; C—Burbank Burroughs at Lakewood; D—Monrovia at Great Oak.
First round, Friday, 3:15 p.m.

Winner wild-card A at No. 1 Aquinas; Temecula Valley at Capistrano Valley Christian; Crescenta Valley at Ocean View; winner wild-card B at Quartz Hill; Crespi at Grace Brethren; West Torrance at Simi Valley; Corona Santiago at Kaiser; Oaks Christian at No. 4 Mater Dei.

Newport Harbor at No. 3 Gahr; Fountain Valley at Fullerton; Norco at Calabasas; winner wild-card C at Vista Murrieta; Royal at West Ranch; Paloma Valley at Tesoro; Charter Oak at Woodbridge; winner wild-card D at No. 2 South Hills.

DIVISION 3
First round, Thursday, 3:15 p.m. unless noted

Long Beach Wilson at No. 1 La Serna; Walnut at Buena; Newbury Park at Redondo; Dana Hills at Aliso Niguel; Corona Centennial at Yorba Linda; Temescal Canyon at Edison; La Salle vs. Flintridge Prep at Glendale Sports Complex (Friday); Beckman at No. 4 Long Beach Poly.

California at No. 3 San Marcos; Gardena Serra at Tahquitz; Segerstrom at Palm Desert; Redlands East Valley at Summit; Sonora at Riverside Poly; South Torrance at Highland; San Clemente at Cerritos; Westlake at No. 2 Valencia.

DIVISION 4
First round, Friday, 3:15 p.m.

No. 1 Crean Lutheran at Pasadena Poly; Los Altos at Nogales; Chino at El Rancho; Burbank at Elsinore; Arrowhead Christian at Orange; Laguna Hills at Sultana; Chaparral at Adelanto; Malibu at No. 4 La Habra

St. Bonaventure at No. 3 Northwood; Anaheim Canyon at Oak Hills; Valley View at Citrus Hill; Glendora at Barstow; Santa Barbara at South Pasadena; Ramona at Brea Olinda; El Segundo at Don Lugo; Hemet at No. 2 Linfield Christian.

DIVISION 5
First round, Thursday, 3:15 p.m. unless noted

(No. 1 Bishop Montgomery, bye.) Oxnard at Santa Paula; La Palma Kennedy at Montebello, 5 p.m.; Anaheim at Pasadena Marshall; Hillcrest at Windward; Santa Ana Calvary Chapel at Century; Pasadena at de Toledo; Victor Valley at No. 4 Apple Valley.

No. 3 Peninsula at Milken; Whittier Christian at Katella; Liberty at Colton; Salesian at Estancia; Riverside North at Savanna; Schurr at St. Anthony; Ontario at Village Christian; Carter at No. 2 Shadow Hills, 6:30 p.m.

DIVISION 6
Wild-card games, Wednesday, 3:15 p.m.

A—Rialto at Western Chr.; B—Paramount at Vasquez; C—Costa Mesa at Desert Mirage; D—Excelsior at Castaic; E—Garden Grove Santiago at Lancaster; F—Sierra Vista at Arroyo; G—Indio at Miller; H—Rancho Verde at Xavier Prep; I—St. Monica at Burbank Providence.
First round, Friday, 3:15 p.m.

Winner wild-card A at No. 1 Bloomington; winner wild-card B at Loara; Orange Vista at Riverside Prep; winner wild-card C at Trinity Classical; winner wild-card D at Oxford Academy; winner wild-card E at Jurupa Valley; Garey at Riverside Notre Dame; Gabrielino at No. 4 Mayfair.

Winner wild-card F at No. 3 Norwalk; Carpinteria vs. Lancaster Desert Christian at Duntley Park (Lancaster); winner wild-card G at Lakeside; Temecula Prep at Hesperia Christian; winner wild-card H at San Marino; Beverly Hills at Alhambra; Los Amigos at Dunn; winner wild-card I at No. 2 Campbell Hall.

DIVISION 7
Wild-card games, Tuesday, 3:15 p.m. unless noted

A—Webb at South El Monte; C—Coachella Valley at Desert Chapel; D—Lennox Academy at Santa Maria Valley Christian; E—Academy for Careers & Exploration vs. Environmental Charter at Rogers/Anderson Park (Lawndale), 4:15 p.m.; F—Shalhevet at Thacher; G—Redlands Adventist vs. California Lutheran at Big League Dreams (Perris), 4 p.m.; H—Littlerock at Academy for Academic Excellence; I—Coastal Christian at No. 4 Brentwood; J—Santa Rosa Academy at Palm Valley; K—Edgewood at Bethel Christian; L—Cantwell-Sacred Heart at Hawthorne; M—Oakwood at Downey Calvary Chapel, 2 p.m.; N—Newport Beach Pacifica Christian vs. Rolling Hills Prep at Los Angeles Harbor College; O—Bermuda Dunes Desert Christian at Artesia; P—Anza Hamilton at Loma Linda Academy; Q—St. Monica Academy at Fillmore.
Wild-card games, Wednesday, 3:15 p.m.

B—Winner wild-card A at Bosco Tech; R—Winner wild-card Q at Gladstone
First round, Thursday, 3:15 p.m.

Winner wild-card B at No. 1 Ganesha; winner wild-card C at Mesa Grande; winner wild-card D at Newbury Park Adventist; winner wild-card E at Fontana; winner wild-card F at Leuzinger; winner wild-card G at Cornerstone Christian; winner wild-card H at Nuview Bridge; winner wild-card I at New Roads.

Winner wild-card J at No. 3 Banning; winner wild-card K at San Bernardino; winner wild-card L at Cobalt; winner wild-card M at United Christian; winner wild-card N at Coast Union; winner wild-card O at Villanova Prep; winner wild-card P at Animo Leadership; winner wild-card R at No. 2 St. Genevieve.

NOTES: Second round in all divisions, May 9, 3:15 p.m.; quarterfinals, May 12, 3:15 p.m.; semifinals, May 16, 3:15 p.m. Finals, May 19-20 at Blair Field (Long Beach).

SPORTS

Pair is already part of the Pac

UCLA knows what transfers Ford (USC), Sturdivant (Cal) bring after facing them.

By Steve Henson

Spring football is about first impressions, as misleading as they might be. Incoming freshmen, transfers and reserves trying to climb the depth chart all want to dazzle coaches, who would like nothing more than to be dazzled.

Occasionally new players need no introduction.

Receivers J. Michael Sturdivant and Kyle Ford fall into that category. They transferred from Pac-12 schools that played UCLA late last season.

"It's helpful when you have a better understanding of who they are and where they are from," Bruins coach Chip Kelly said.

Sturdivant, who had 65 receptions for 755 yards and seven touchdowns for California last season, has three years of eligibility remaining but safely can be called junior. His father shares his name — Michael Sturdivant — and the family decided to lead with a J rather than end with a Jr.

"We just moved it to the front to be a little different," Sturdivant said.

The result is a nickname of J-Mike rather than, say, M-Stu. He likes that. UCLA coaches like that he's a field-stretching speedster.

Sturdivant had five catches for 70 yards and a touchdown in Cal's 35-28 loss to UCLA in the regular-season finale Nov. 25. After Cal's 4-8 season, quarterback Jack Plummer transferred to Louisville and Sturdivant headed for Westwood.

"We saw J-Mike in our last game last year, so we got a good chance to see him and get a feel for what type of receiver he was," Kelly said. "Then when he became available through the transfer portal, we didn't have to study a heck of a lot of tape because we'd studied his tape leading up to the game."

The same is true of Ford, who found himself surrounded by speedsters at USC after Lincoln Riley became coach a year ago and feasted on the transfer portal. Ford battled injuries

[See **UCLA,** B6]

NBA PLAYOFFS :: SECOND ROUND

LAKERS VS. GOLDEN STATE

GAME 1: TONIGHT AT GOLDEN STATE, 7, TNT

Photographs by Associated Press; photo illustration by Tim Hubbard Los Angeles Times

GOLDEN OLDIES

Longtime rivals Curry, James headline Lakers-Warriors series

By Dan Woike

Pick one of the story lines. Alone, any could carry the Lakers-Warriors playoff series.

The top geographical rivalry on the West Coast, the battle between the Bay and L.A.

The generation's two best players, LeBron James and Stephen Curry, meeting once again in the playoffs.

The admiration between James and Golden State's Draymond Green.

The Warriors' Hall of Fame coach from Pacific Palisades, Steve Kerr, getting to test his legacy against the team for which he used to cheer from high up in the Forum.

The Warriors' sharpshooting guard from Orange County, Klay Thompson, getting a chance to play huge games in the same building where he used to chat with Kobe Bryant after coming to work with his radio analyst father, former Laker Mychal Thompson.

It's all there, the Lakers and Warriors set to meet in a playoff series that has all of the required ingredients for a special two weeks.

The rivalry between James and Curry has to be the headliner, the players meeting in four straight NBA Finals during their careers and now renewing the rivalry in Game 1 between the Lakers and the Warriors on Tuesday night in San Francisco.

"That's the rivalry of the generation," Lakers coach Darvin Ham said. "... It's going to be another fun battle."

Monday after the Lakers practiced, James reiterated his respect for Curry and the Warriors.

"He puts in the work. And when you put in the work, nine times out of 10 you're going to see the results. And he's done that throughout his whole entire career," James said. "I have nothing but the utmost respect for Steph and everything he's been able to accomplish, not only on the floor but also off the floor too. It's just great to have people like that in this league to set an example for the generation to come."

James said the mental test against Golden State is unlike almost anything else he's faced.

"You've gotta be super-duper locked in," James said. "You can't make a mistake. You just can't. You can't make a mistake or they'll make you pay. It's literally that simple. Some teams that I've played in my career that's had that notion on you and they're one of them.

[See **Lakers** B8]

For Vargas, second base is a mixed bag

He's neither star nor liability since Dodgers gave rookie the starting job

By Mike DiGiovanna

The hesitation in his response when Dodgers manager Dave Roberts was asked to assess the defensive play of rookie second baseman Miguel Vargas spoke volumes.

"It's been ... OK," Roberts said, pausing to find the right description. "Part of having him take on this position this year is we knew there would be some growing pains. But there's also an expectation he will get better. There are some plays I think we'd like to have back, but the bet is on the person, the player and the athlete."

Vargas, 23, made only 27 starts at second base in five minor league seasons and was not considered an elite defender at his primary position, third base. So it seemed risky for the Dodgers to entrust second to him, especially with a new ban on infield shifts requiring second basemen to cover far more ground than they had in the last decade.

At 6 feet 3 and 205 pounds, Vargas is taller, with longer levers, than most big league second basemen, and some talent evaluators wondered whether he would have the quickness, range and athleticism to handle the position.

But one month into his first season at a new position, Vargas has been ... well, OK. He is neither an early Gold Glove Award favorite nor a glaring defensive liability.

Vargas had committed only two errors entering Monday night's game against the Philadelphia Phillies, one a bobbled grounder that led to an unearned run in a 3-2 loss to the Chicago Cubs on April 16,

[See **Vargas,** B6]

Ashley Landis Associated Press

DAVID PERALTA is greeted after his three-run, second-inning blast. The Dodgers hit four homers.

Trea Turner was open to L.A. stay

Phillie says he would have considered offer, but it never occurred. Dodgers cruise to win.

DODGERS 13
PHILADELPHIA 4

By Jack Harris

He said it on the first day he arrived at Dodger Stadium, decked out in the club's iconic shade of blue shortly after the 2021 trade deadline.

He said it again Monday, wearing Philadelphia Phillies red in his first trip back to Chavez Ravine after his departure this past offseason.

Despite his Florida roots and East Coast inclinations, Trea Turner would have been open to staying with the Dodgers long term — to potentially spend the prime of his career with a juggernaut in Los Angeles.

"I would've entertained it," Turner said. "They were definitely in my top few teams."

The inevitable happened instead.

In what has become a common theme for a franchise that has watched a parade of premium talent walk out the door in recent years, the Dodgers never came close to keeping Turner in the Southland.

Despite having all of last year to work on a potential extension for the two-time All-Star shortstop after the Dodgers traded for him midway through 2021, the sides failed to make enough traction in contract negotiations to strike a new deal.

And once Turner reached free agency over the winter, the Dodgers effectively bowed out of the sweepstakes for the 29-year-old star, failing to make any formal offers before he signed with the Phillies for 11 years and $300 million in early De-

[See **Dodgers,** B7]

TYLER KAUFMAN Associated Press

BRYCE YOUNG poses with Panthers fans as the No. 1 pick in the NFL draft. The Mater Dei alum preceded No. 2 C.J. Stroud of Rancho Cucamonga.

PREP RALLY

Young and Stroud form Southland select company

By Eric Sondheimer

There never had been a time when the No. 1 and No. 2 choices in the NFL draft were quarterbacks from Southern California. It happened last week.

It was a historic NFL draft for Southern California products, with Bryce Young (Santa Ana Mater Dei and L.A. Cathedral) going No. 1 to Carolina and C.J. Stroud (Rancho Cucamonga) going No. 2 to Houston. The only other time the No. 1 and No. 2 picks were from California was 1969 when O.J. Simpson (San Francisco Galileo) went to Buffalo and George Kunz (L.A. Loyola) went to Atlanta.

Young's selection will be even more historic in that he stands just 5 feet 10⅛ inches tall, allowing him to serve as an example that height is no barrier to becoming an elite quarterback. He grew up in Pasadena, where Jackie Robinson also broke barriers.

Former West Hills Chaminade receiver Michael Wilson was a third-round selection of Arizona. You could hear the emotion in his voice when he received the call. He had overcome injuries at Stanford to make a huge impression at the NFL combine. The Chargers took Crenshaw High's Daiyan Henley in the third round.

Former La Cañada Flintridge St. Francis safety Daniel Scott was a three-sport athlete in high school and captain of the football and basketball teams. He was taken in the fifth round by Indianapolis.

More football

The last time former NFL quarterback Matt Moore coached in high school, he was at his alma mater, Newhall Hart, and it didn't last long. He was called out of retirement to help the Kansas City Chiefs in 2019 when Patrick Mahomes was injured, winning a Super Bowl ring. Now he's helping his former quarterback coach, Dean Herrington, at La Cañada Flintridge St. Francis as an assistant and if any NFL teams call, he said about returning, "Breaking news: No."

Moore will help develop class of 2025 quarterback John Sanders, along with Sanders' brother, Shawn, a class of 2027 quarterback and kicker. The brothers commute from Mojave, driving 70 miles each way. Their father played center at Hart when the late Jim Bonds was the quarterback.

The spring and summer seven-on-seven passing season began Saturday. Burbank held a tournament. Several teams hadn't even begun spring workouts.

Chatsworth Sierra Canyon won the tournament in the debut of quarterback Wyatt Becker, who transferred from Sherman Oaks Notre Dame. Cole Crawford and Xavier Jordan had some big catches. Simi Valley was runner-up and that was impressive considering the Pioneers were breaking in many new players.

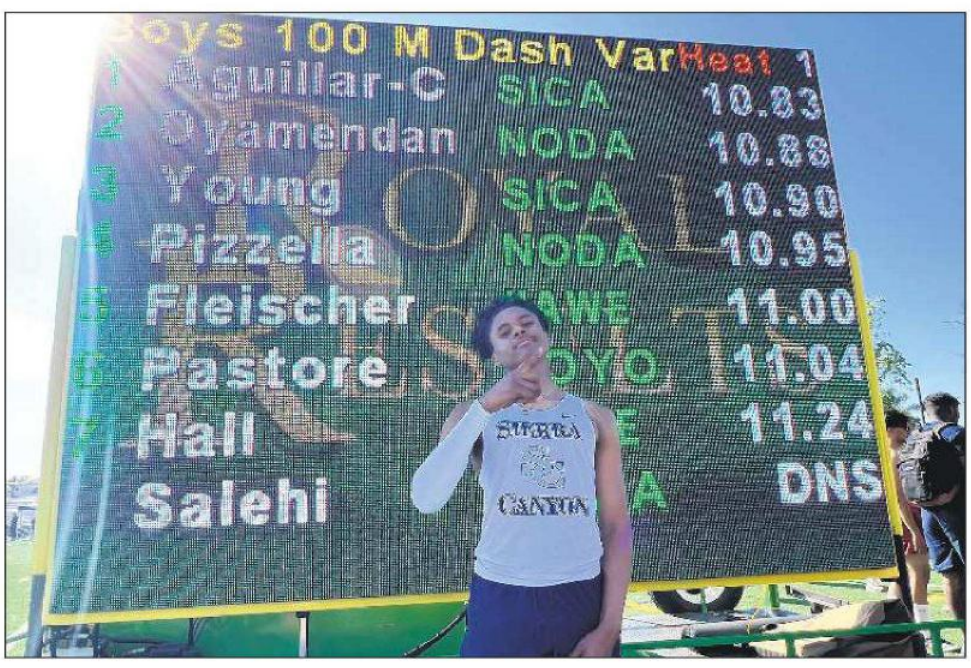
Softball

Playoff pairings were released Saturday, with Norco earning the No. 1 seed in Southern Section Division 1.

The lack of a dominant pitcher means Division 1 could be wide open. It's a 16-team bracket with eight wild-card games.

ERIC SONDHEIMER Los Angeles Times

BROTHERS Shawn, left, and John Sanders are quarterbacks at La Cañada Flintridge St. Francis who will be mentored by former NFL signal-caller Matt Moore.



ERIC SONDHEIMER Los Angeles Times

JALEN CARNES, a freshman at Chatsworth Sierra Canyon, was a breakout star last week as the 100- and 200-meter champion at the Mission League finals.

The home run derby between Ella Parker of Sherman Oaks Notre Dame and Anahi Arreola of Westlake Village Oaks Christian will continue in the playoffs. Arreola has 17 home runs. Parker has 13 home runs and 33 walks.

Tennis

Harvard-bound James MacDonald, the No. 2 seed from Irvine University, defeated top-seeded Corona del Mar junior Niels Hoffmann, 6-4, 6-2, in the singles final at Ojai. MacDonald is the third consecutive boys' CIF singles champion at Ojai — which has conducted its high school division championships since 1899 — from University, and University's fourth singles champion over the last 10 years, joining Conrad Brown in 2022, Aditya Gupta in 2019 and Gage Brymer from 2011 to 2013.

In the CIF doubles final, the second-seeded brother act of senior Avery Tallakson and freshman Brayden Tallakson became Irvine Woodbridge's first doubles champions at Ojai by defeating seniors Rex Harrison and Aden Dorros of The Bishop's School (La Jolla), 6-4, 6-2. Avery is a University of New Mexico recruit, and younger brother Brayden won Ojai's boys' 14s singles championship last year.

University also won the Griggs Cup, awarded to the best performing high school in singles and doubles competition at Ojai, for the third consecutive year.

Track

The Southern Section prelims take place this weekend, with the City Section holding its league finals.

At last week's Southern Section league finals, a new star was unveiled. Freshman Jalen Carnes of Sierra Canyon won the 100 and 200 meters at the Mission League finals.

Here are the sites for Saturday's Southern Section prelims: Division 1 at Trabuco Hills; Division 2 at Ventura; Division 3 at Yorba Linda and Division 4 at Carpinteria. The divisional championships are May 13 at Moorpark with the Masters Meet on May 20 at Moorpark. The state championships are May 26 and 27 at Buchanan High in Clovis.

Swimming

The Southern Section swimming prelims and championships will take place May 2-6 in Riverside.

The big story last week was Long Beach Poly ending Long Beach Wilson's 49-year run as league champion.

Etc.

After a leave of absence for more than a month during a district investigation, Brent Lavoie was reinstated as Long Beach Poly baseball coach last week. The team won the Moore League title during his absence. ...

Chris Chaddick was named football coach at San Bernardino San Gorgonio. ...

Huntington Beach sophomore Otto Espinoza committed to Ohio State for baseball. ...

First baseman Julian Angulo of Downey Warren committed to Cal Poly Pomona. ...

Lillie Vehling, a Sherman Oaks Notre Dame water polo standout, was selected the CIF scholar athlete of the year. ...

San Pedro's softball team forfeited seven games because of an ineligible player. ...

Junior running back Terrell Cooks of Sierra Canyon committed to San Diego State...

Newport Beach Sage Hill junior basketball standout Carter Bryant committed to Arizona. ...

The Southern Section is proposing to move forward with more playoff divisions decided by regular-season results instead of placing teams before the season. A proposal could come in September. ...

Jarrett Segura of Mission Hills Bishop Alemany committed to Cal State Dominguez Hills for baseball. ...

Zach Carter is the new boys' basketball coach at Bellflower...

Dante Ogbu of Sherman Oaks Notre Dame committed to Westmont College for basketball. ...

Jake Hoss of San Clemente committed to Long Beach State for water polo. ...

Defensive coordinator Marcus Galan was promoted to football coach at San Gabriel. ...

Fred Emmerson is the new football coach at Woodland Hills Taft. He was an assistant at Granada Hills Kennedy. He inherits a new football field. ...

Catcher Brock Wirthgen of Orange Lutheran committed to California Baptist. ...

Jacob Rosenfeld of Woodland Hills El Camino Real committed to Cal Lutheran for baseball. ...

Guard Dylan Metoyer from Sierra Canyon committed to Howard University for basketball.

Did you enjoy reading this excerpt of our Prep Rally newsletter? Visit latimes.com/newsletters to sign up and receive it in your inbox each Monday.

A TRUE LEGEND HAS BEEN CALLED UP.

VIN SCULLY
1927 - 2022
"The main thing, I want people to remember me as a good man, a good husband, a good father, a good grandfather. That's the most important thing of all."
Los Angeles Times
SPECIAL Los Angeles Times EDITION
1927-2022
Vin Scully
The Soundtrack of Los Angeles
Narrating Baseball. Narrating Life

Celebrate Vin Scully's life, legacy and nearly 7-decade career. Take home a piece of history with the August 6 special section. Or, get even more beautiful photographs and stories in "Vin Scully Magazine: The Soundtrack of Los Angeles." Remember Vin's greatest moments through these commemorative products and more.

Scan the QR code, or visit **shoplatimes.com/vinscully** to explore the collection.

SHOP LA Times

Los Angeles Times

E

CALENDAR

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023 ▪ LATIMES.COM/CALENDAR

EMIL RAVELO For The Times

THE MARS VOLTA'S Omar Rodríguez-López, left, and Cedric Bixler-Zavala. The band is back with its second album in a year.

Reunited with renewed purpose

The Mars Volta repairs its internal rift and returns after its singer leaves Scientology

BY AUGUST BROWN

In October 2022, the Mars Volta walked onto the stage of a sold-out Hollywood Palladium for their first L.A. show in a decade. For three nights, to nearly 12,000 fans in total, the punk/prog/Latin band — with core members Cedric Bixler-Zavala, 48, and Omar Rodríguez-López, 47 — played three-hour sets of searing, heady jams.

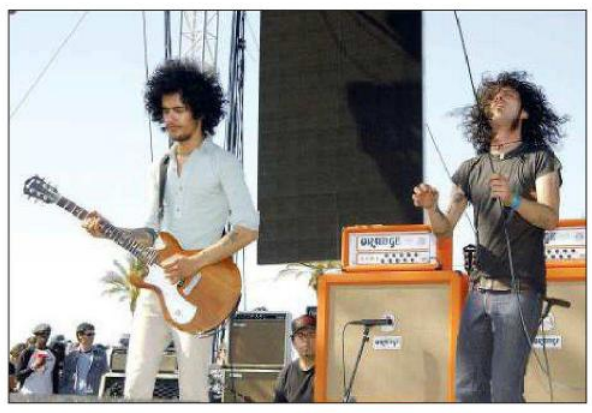
Long lauded as one of heavy music's most ambitious acts, they played cuts like "Inertiatic ESP" with a vicious new focus. On the sinister "Blacklight Shine," falsetto-wailing frontman Bixler-Zavala sang in Spanish: "Karma's slow to come / But it will come / You're going to pay." Then he switched to English: "Help me out of this godforsaken cure ... I'll shine the blackest light / To the culprit on all fours."

Many fans knew exactly where those lyrics were pointed. Scientology's Celebrity Centre was just a mile away. The church, Bixler-Zavala claims in an interview and lawsuit, nearly destroyed his band and his family.

Bixler-Zavala began attending programs at the Church of Scientology in 2009 after his wife, Chrissie Carnell Bixler, introduced him to the organization's tight-knit scene of actors and artists.

In 2016, Carnell Bixler alleged that "That '70s Show" actor Danny Masterson, a fellow Scientologist, had sexually and physically assaulted her in the early 2000s, joining two other women testifying against Masterson in his criminal trial on rape charges (a fourth joined a civil suit against him). The Bixlers allege the church then began a relentless campaign of harassment and threats against them, including poisoning their dogs, stalk-

[See **Mars Volta,** E2]



TIM MOSENFELDER Getty Images

GUITARIST Rodríguez-López, left, and singer Bixler-Zavala perform at Coachella in 2003.

Singing one with Willie for his 90th

From Beck to Keith Richards, 10 standout moments in brilliant tribute to Nelson.

BY MIKAEL WOOD AND ERIN OSMON

It's not much of an exaggeration — and yet it defies logic — to say that you could trace the history of American music's last 100 years during the two nights of "Willie Nelson 90: Long Story Short" at the Hollywood Bowl over the weekend.

Jazz, country, gospel, blues, rock, Nashville pop, Americana, even hip-hop (well, he smokes with Snoop) are all seamlessly part of Nelson's DNA, and all were represented over the dozens of tributes paid to him as he turned 90.

With more than 45 artists taking the stage to honor Nelson, it's hard to choose just 10 outstanding mo-

[See **Nelson,** E3]

RANDALL MICHELSON EB Media

WILLIE NELSON, left, greets Keith Richards during a celebration for the legend at the Hollywood Bowl.

Oscars make change to rules

Film academy updates regulations after the Andrea Riseborough campaign controversy.

BY JOSH ROTTENBERG

Following controversy earlier this year over Andrea Riseborough's surprise lead actress Oscar nomination for the little-seen movie "To Leslie," the film academy announced Monday that it has updated its regulations around campaigning for the coveted awards.

The new regulations, approved by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' 54-member board of governors, clarify rules regarding communications to members to promote particular films and performances, including the use of social media, and limit the number of hosted screenings that are allowed prior to nominations.

Among other changes, organization also imposed new limits on academy governors' involvement in lobbying for Oscars, expressly forbidding them from hosting events or screenings for nominated movies or otherwise publicly endorsing any films or performances in contention unless they are directly associated with them.

While the academy has periodically updated its rules as the ever-escalating arms race of Oscar campaigning has grown more ex-

[See **Academy,** E6]

Momentum Pictures

RISEBOROUGH starred in the drama "To Leslie."

TELEVISION REVIEW

Political comedy of errors

Watergate meets 'Veep' in tonally confused 'White House Plumbers.'

ROBERT LLOYD
TELEVISION CRITIC

Outside of home repair, the word "plumbers" nowadays most quickly brings to mind a pair of Italian brothers in overalls. In an earlier time, it might have conjured up the group behind the caper that led to a cover-up that led to a committee that led to a presidential resignation, and that has doomed us to live forever with the suffix "—gate" attached to any kind of scandal.

While this morsel of history has been portrayed in pop culture over the decades, including in last year's "Gaslit," it was not until now, half a century after the fact, that the men who planned the bugging of the Democratic National Committee headquarters and didn't quite pull it off have been deemed worthy of their own miniseries. So we come to "White House Plumbers," a tale in five parts, which premiered Monday on HBO.

Nominally based on the

[See **'Plumbers,'** E6]

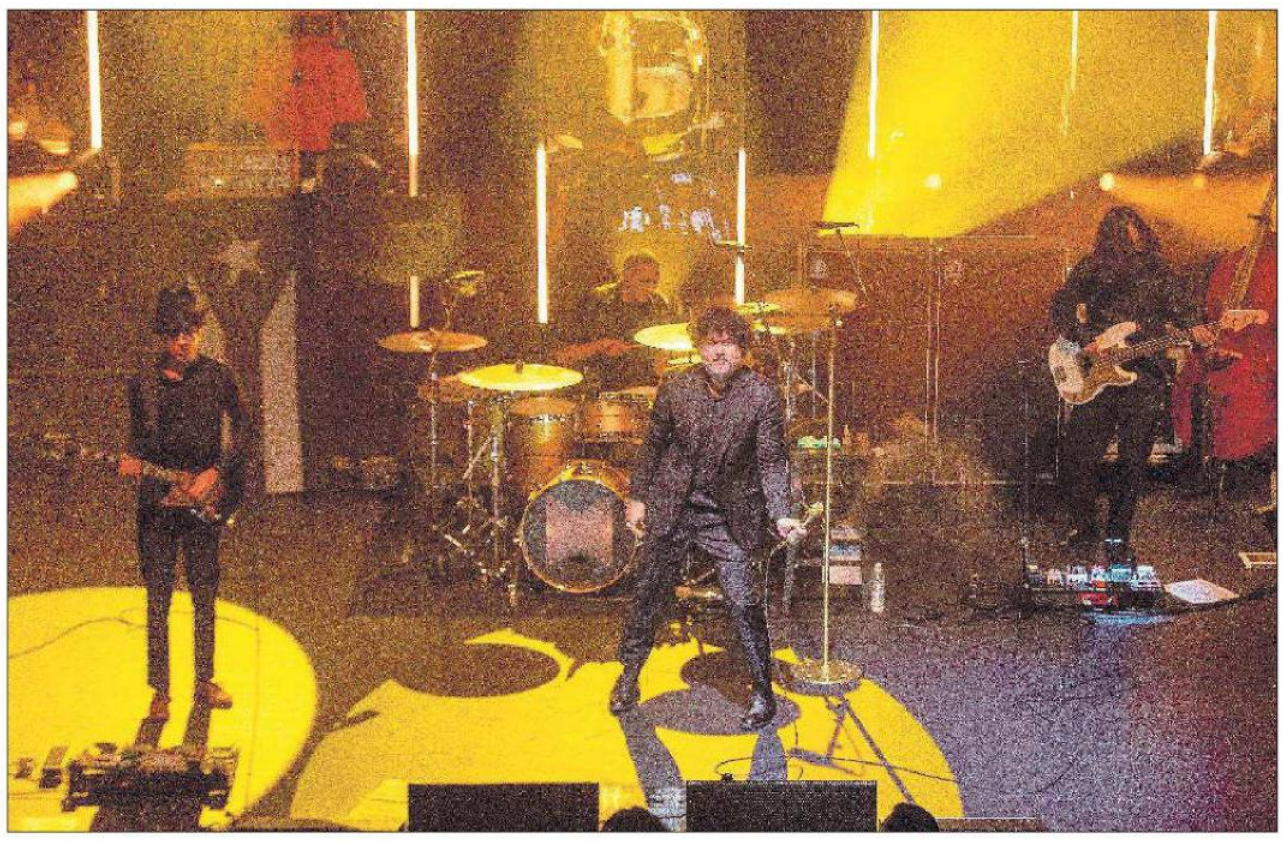
Mars Volta reunites with a purpose

[**Mars Volta,** from E1]
ing and surveilling them and claiming they were "fair game" for retaliation, according to their 2019 civil suit filed against Masterson, the Church of Scientology International and its leader David Miscavige (Bixler-Zavala is also a plaintiff in the civil suit).

Masterson's criminal case ended in a mistrial in November. Prosecutors refiled the case and a second trial began in April; if found guilty, Masterson could face 45 years to life in prison. The civil suit is set for a hearing June 28.

Masterson pleaded not guilty to all charges in the criminal case. A spokesperson for Masterson declined to comment on the case or the allegations in the civil suit.

Scientology spokeswoman Karin Pouw said in a statement to The Times that "the scandalous allegations about the Church" contained in the Bixlers' suit "are complete fabrications." She denied that the Church of Scientology had anything to do with the death of the Bixlers' dogs, and denied the harassment and surveillance allegations.



MAT HAYWARD Getty Images

THE BAND performs in Seattle on Oct. 14, 2022, the month after releasing its self-titled comeback album.

LUCY NICHOLSON Associated Press

DANNY MASTERSON, with attorneys Thomas Mesereau, right, and Sharon Appelbaum, is arraigned on rape charges in L.A. in 2020. He pleaded not guilty.

BEYOND MUSIC

While the Bixlers await the outcome of the second trial, on April 21, the Mars Volta released its second new album in a year. "Que Dios Te Maldiga Mi Corazón" (May God Curse You My Love) is a Latin revamp of their 2022 self-titled comeback LP, pulling from the duo's Mexican and Puerto Rican heritages and anti-colonial politics.

The band dissolved back in 2013, in part due to Bixler-Zavala's involvement with the church (Rodríguez-López did not become a Scientologist). It took years for the longtime friends and bandmates to fully reconcile.

Describing Scientology's role in the band's breakup, Bixler-Zavala said, "I've grappled with that with great difficulty. But Omar allowed me to come back in and make amends, to own up to my past bull—."

"It's hard to talk about," Rodríguez-López said, "when you love someone and worry about them like that."

In March, Bixler-Zavala and Rodríguez-López met up at Silent Zoo Studios in Glendale to talk about "Que Dios" and the last few turbulent years. The two met growing up in El Paso but now live hundreds of miles from each other — Bixler-Zavala with his wife and children in L.A. and Rodríguez-López splitting time between his birthplace of Puerto Rico and the duo's old hometown.

While they have an easy rapport, they rarely give interviews anymore. They still wear their longtime uniforms of all-black clothing and cascading curly hair, even if time has tempered their thrashing, downed-power-line stage presence a bit.

Rodríguez-López admits he had mixed feelings about revisiting this beloved but troubled band. "My feeling about reuniting was always 'I'm not interested in this unless we have a purpose,' " he said. "When this thing happened with [Cedric's] family, it was clear to me that now there's a purpose. Now it means something beyond just playing music again."

Bixler-Zavala wants those still involved with Scientology to find hope in his experience.

"Part of me wants to be a lighthouse in the fog," he continued, "because there's a lot of people who have very similar stories to ours, and they're so afraid."

The Mars Volta are sui generis in heavy rock. After forming in the early 2000s in the wake of their beloved post-punk band At the Drive-In, the duo turned to dizzying time signatures, tropical psychedelia, acid-dipped guitar noise and dense, freewheeling dread.

They blew away Rick Rubin, who produced their 2003 debut, "De-Loused in the Comatorium." In the studio, they've recruited the Red Hot Chili Peppers' John Frusciante and Flea and Queens of the Stone Age's drummer Jon Theodore as backing musicians, and pop star Lizzo cites their song "Wax Simulacra" as one of her formative teenage anthems. They've landed three Top 10 albums and have played to stadium-size crowds.

SLOWLY FORMING RIFT

In early 2009, the band had just wrapped up a tour for its fourth LP, "The Bedlam in Goliath," which debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard 200. That year, Bixler-Zavala met his future wife at the Hollywood nightclub Bardot, and he soon grew curious about her unorthodox faith.

"I had seen Scientology brochures and DVDs in her apartment, so I asked her about it," Bixler-Zavala said. "She was apprehensive about admitting it. Looking back, I could tell there was something painful there."

He sought out the church's counseling to kick an expensive marijuana habit. At the time, it worked.

"I did the purification and started taking courses and life-repair auditing," he said. "I got super dogmatic, because I'd found something that worked as a higher power."

Scientology is the global church founded by L. Ron Hubbard in the 1950s, based in Los Angeles and Clearwater, Fla. Its founding text, "Dianetics," and Hubbard's subsequent writings teach that humans have an immortal soul (a "thetan") that's been damaged by traumatic experiences (which are stored as harmful "engrams"). Through its process of "auditing," a Scientologist can heal those wounds and, after taking courses that can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, ascend up the "Bridge to Total Freedom."

While once powerful in Hollywood, the church's influence waned in the 2010s after investigative books, newspaper stories and documentaries like HBO's "Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief" alleged a culture of abuse that included imprisonment, forced labor, psychological manipulation and harassment against anyone who spoke out against the church. (The church has denied these claims.) Despite the negative publicity, Tom Cruise, Elisabeth Moss and John Travolta are still high-profile members, and the church owns many Hollywood-area landmarks.

Bixler-Zavala was welcomed into the inner sanctum of the Celebrity Centre, where he joined Scientologist actors like Giovanni Ribisi, Jason Lee and Michael Peña. (Lee has since left the church.) "They built me up and scratched my back," says Bixler-Zavala. "I remember one time they gave me like $10,000 worth of books, and I'd show up to gala events and be seated around other celebrities," he said. "When I look back at the way I was, I think I was an annoying prick."

Bixler-Zavala's religion had become a wedge behind the scenes when the Mars Volta broke up in 2013. His immersion in its culture alarmed friends. Bixler-Zavala and Rodríguez-López endured a stormy, off-and-on friendship (sometimes not speaking to each other, sometimes playing in shared side projects) for years after.

"Friends and family were supportive at first, if that was going to be that thing that worked for me. But some were vocally opposed," Bixler-Zavala said. "I was stuck in my issues and my own bubble world. I couldn't see past any of that."

In 2019, several years after first learning about other alleged victims, Carnell Bixler sued the church. "I could see the crisis of faith in her when they made her feel like this was her fault," Bixler-Zavala said, echoing claims in the family's civil suit. "In Scientology, certain emotions are just bad; it's bad to go the route of any medicine, self-help, psychiatry. It's bad to question anything. It was like we lived in North Korea."

Then began the grueling, humbling work for his band and friends to trust in him again.

"Anger can really blind you and keep you from any accountability," Bixler-Zavala said, turning toward his bandmate. "One of my saving graces is having him in my life. Him being so patient with me, it's a humbling experience. I haven't always been that way with him, and yet he's allowed me to make amends and own up to my past."

"I think you have to love the decisions you've made, even when you've been wrong," Rodríguez-López replied.

The band's self-titled comeback album last year was their way to lend shape to the confusion of the last decade. It sported their most streamlined arrangements and their boldest declarations of unbridled rage.

The humid menace of "Que Dios" might be an even better fit for these songs. Latin folk always hovered in the background of the band's records, but now Rodríguez-López lets it bloom — classical guitars, skittering percussion and a confident hand with Caribbean, Mexican and South American rhythms.

"From the beginning, that was a designing principle of the band, honoring our roots and honoring our dead," Rodríguez-López said.

The band ends the video for the single "Graveyard Love" with a Spanish quote from Lolita Lebrón, the Puerto Rican activist who attacked the U.S. Capitol in 1954: "I did not come to kill anyone, I came to die for Puerto Rico!"

"Colonialism is always at the forefront of my mind," Rodríguez-López said. "It's such a complex history, one that most people are ignorant to. Puerto Ricans have no power over the laws that govern us, we've suffered a land grab and forced sterilizations. The United States has this hubris where we want to go to Mars, but the same people who could fix the electrical grid in my country in a matter of months won't do it.

"The one thing that keeps us together," he continued, "is our resilience, and still trying to live a fruitful life."

Bixler-Zavala is trying to do the same today. He likes Texas outlaw country and the ways it meshes with his Mexican heritage. In this new setting, his lyrics about Scientology, like on "Graveyard Love," ring like a dusty revenge ballad.

"In that house, you know I lost myself every time," he sings on "Blank Condolences." "My nails scrawl in blood, I will always haunt you / Burn your fields of sage, it won't keep me from collecting that bounty on your head."

"That's directed at certain people that have caused my family harm," Bixler-Zavala said point-blank. "I'm lifting up the carpet and showing where certain roaches are."

AN ONGOING BATTLE

In November, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Charlaine Olmedo declared a mistrial at Masterson's rape trial after jurors deadlocked. In her testimony, Carnell Bixler alleged that her romantic relationship with Masterson turned violent in the early 2000s, including multiple rapes and physical assaults. (Carnell Bixler declined to speak to The Times.)

In the civil suit, she alleges that "Masterson regularly forced Plaintiff Bixler to have sex with him and became violent when Plaintiff Bixler refused. In one instance, after Plaintiff Bixler refused sex, Masterson dragged Plaintiff Bixler naked across their bedroom floor while berating her appearance. He then threw her, still naked, into the hall and locked the bedroom door."

She said she reported Masterson to the Church of Scientology's ethics officer, yet, according to her suit, was told "she was not raped, because you can't be raped by someone you are in a consensual relationship with.' " She claims the ethics officer asked "what she did to cause the assault and ordered her to complete an ethics course."

"It, like, almost put me in a state of terror and I understood I needed to do as I was told and not tell anybody," Carnell Bixler told the criminal trial's jury. "They would destroy me."

Scientology responded in a statement, "The Church has no policy prohibiting or discouraging members from reporting criminal conduct of anyone, Scientologists or not, to law enforcement. Quite the opposite. Church policy explicitly demands Scientologists abide by all laws of the land. All allegations to the contrary are totally false."

In the civil suit, the Bixlers claim that the church's agents have "systematically stalked, harassed, invaded their and their family's privacy ... to silence and intimidate them." They allege their home security system was repeatedly hacked, Carnell Bixler's phone "ported" to reroute data, and their car and home were broken into.

In October 2017, the suit alleges, "Plaintiff Bixler was driving on the street where her home was located when she was chased by two of Defendants' agents in a vehicle who were filming her. Plaintiff Bixler was so frightened that she drove to the local police department." In June 2019, "a friend of Defendant Masterson's contacted Plaintiff Bixler-Zavala and threatened to leak nude photos of an underage Plaintiff Bixler."

The suit also claims that in 2017, their "family dog died inexplicably. They requested an autopsy and learned that the dog died of unexplained traumatic injuries to her trachea and esophagus."

In 2020, the suit continues, they "discovered an amount of ground meat had been thrown over their fence into their back yard. The meat had been packed around a rectangular tablet of rat poison. The Bixler Plaintiffs soon learned that one of their dogs had consumed the raw meat and rat poison. The dog would die as a result of ingesting the poison. In the days following the death of their dog the Bixler Plaintiffs also discovered ground meat in the area of their fence to their driveway. Packed within the ground meat was broken glass."

A Scientology spokeswoman stated that "Cedric Bixler-Zavala and his wife's claim that the Church 'murdered' their dogs is a flat-out lie." The spokeswoman added that Carnell Bixler blamed a dog kennel on social media for one dog's injuries, and states that the Church did not hear directly from LAPD about any alleged dog-poisoning incident.

Mike Rinder, the former chief executive of Scientology's Office of Special Affairs (the church's international legal and communications division) left the church in 2007 and joined the board of the Aftermath Foundation, a support organization for ex-Scientologists. He hosts the podcast "Scientology: Fair Game" with actor and fellow former Scientologist Leah Remini, and wrote a memoir "A Billion Years: My Escape From a Life in the Highest Ranks of Scientology."

He said it would not be surprising if the church tried to silence high-profile former members like the Bixlers.

"If they get Scientology pissed off at them, they will lose friends and family to disconnection. Those who are Scientologists in good standing will be ordered to cease all communication with them, and they know that Scientology engages in 'Fair Game' to smear and harass those they don't like," Rinder told The Times in an email. ("Fair Game" is an alleged Scientology belief that those who run afoul of the church can justly be harassed and threatened.)

Bixler-Zavala says that he and his wife still live in constant fear. "My life is at the point where if my phone rings in my house, my children go and hide under their bed," he said, referring to his 10-year-old twin sons. "My kids know a monster did something bad to their mom."

Whatever the outcome of the new trial (which is expected to last up to two months) or the civil suit, the experience has made the couple, and the band, "as thick as thieves," Bixler-Zavala said. The Mars Volta will be on tour for most of 2023. "It's us against the world."

"Whether it's this family of four people against a huge institution, or whether it's my own country that's still the oldest colony in the world," Rodríguez-López said, "you can still be full of love, and not just bitterness and hatred. That means, in some way, we are winning."

LAEMMLE™ Info Line 310.478.3836
NOT AFRAID OF SUBTITLES
www.LAEMMLE.com

ROYAL 11523 Santa Monica Blvd. West L.A.
CARMEN R 1:20 4:20 7:20
OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN 1:30 4:30 7:30
R.M.N. 1:00 4:00 7:10

MONICA 1332 Second Street Santa Monica
THE END OF SEX R 1:00 5:25
NUCLEAR NOW 1:10 4:10 7:10
POLITE SOCIETY PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:20
NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OTHELLO 1:00 PM
BEAU IS AFRAID R 1:00 6:40
CHEVALIER PG-13 4:20 PM
SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS R 1:10 7:30
EVERYTHING WENT FINE 4:45 PM
WILD LIFE PG-13 3:10 7:30
SHOWING UP R 7:10 PM
AIR R 3:55 PM

TOWN CENTER 17200 Ventura Blvd. Encino
ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET. PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:10
CARMEN R 1:00 4:00 7:00
CHEVALIER PG-13 1:20 7:20
OTHER PEOPLE'S CHILDREN 1:10 7:00
SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS R 1:20 4:10 7:20
AIR R 4:10 PM
DOOMSDAY METEOR 4:30 PM

NEWHALL 22500 Lyons Ave. Santa Clarita
ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET. PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:10
BIG GEORGE FOREMAN PG-13 1:00 4:05 7:10
POLITE SOCIETY PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:30
BEAU IS AFRAID R 6:40 PM
CHEVALIER PG-13 1:00 PM
EVIL DEAD RISE R 1:20 4:20 7:00
SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS R 4:00 PM
AIR R 1:10 4:10 7:20
THE SUPER MARIO BROS. MOVIE PG 12:50 3:00 5:15 7:30

GLENDALE 207 N. Maryland Ave Glendale
THE END OF SEX R 1:20 PM
FREAKS VS. THE REICH 4:00 PM
PARTY GIRL (1995) R 4:35 7:30
POLITE SOCIETY PG-13 1:30 4:20 7:20
NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OTHELLO 1:00 PM
BEAU IS AFRAID R 7:00 PM
HOW TO BLOW UP A PIPELINE R 4:10 PM
JOYLAND 1:00 7:00
SHOWING UP R 1:10 7:10
DE HUMANI CORPORIS FABRICA 4:20 PM
SHORT FILM PROGRAM NR WHEN WE DANCED; 3:30 PM

NoHo 7 5240 Lankershim Blvd. No. Hollywood
ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET. PG-13 1:20 4:20 7:20
THE END OF SEX R 4:35 PM
POLITE SOCIETY PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:30
BEAU IS AFRAID R 12:50 6:55
CADEJO BLANCO 4:00 PM
SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS R 1:20 7:10
JOYLAND 1:00 4:00 7:00
SHOWING UP R 1:10 PM
AIR R 4:10 PM
THE SUPER MARIO BROS. MOVIE PG 12:55 3:10 5:25 7:40
DOCUMENTARY FILM PROGRAM NR 7:30 PM

CLAREMONT 450 W. 2nd Street Claremont
ARE YOU THERE GOD? IT'S ME, MARGARET. PG-13 1:20 4:20 7:10
POLITE SOCIETY PG-13 1:40 4:30 7:20
NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OTHELLO 1:00 PM
BEAU IS AFRAID R 3:40 PM
SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS R 7:00 PM
SHOWING UP R 1:00 7:30
AIR R 4:00 PM
THE SUPER MARIO BROS. MOVIE PG 12:55 3:10 5:25 7:40

BARGAIN IN ( ) CC CLOSED CAPTION NSP NON-STANDARD PRICING FOR 5/2/2023 ONLY

Saluting Willie Nelson

[**Nelson,** from E1]
ments, but these stood out, musically and emotionally.

1. BECK (SATURDAY)

Beck countrified his "Sea Change" sound for "Hands on the Wheel," from 1975's "Red Headed Stranger." People really underestimate Beck as a singer, but this tune was a perfect match for his range, light soulfulness and way with phrasing.

— Erin Osmon

2. ROSANNE CASH AND KRIS KRISTOFFERSON (SATURDAY)

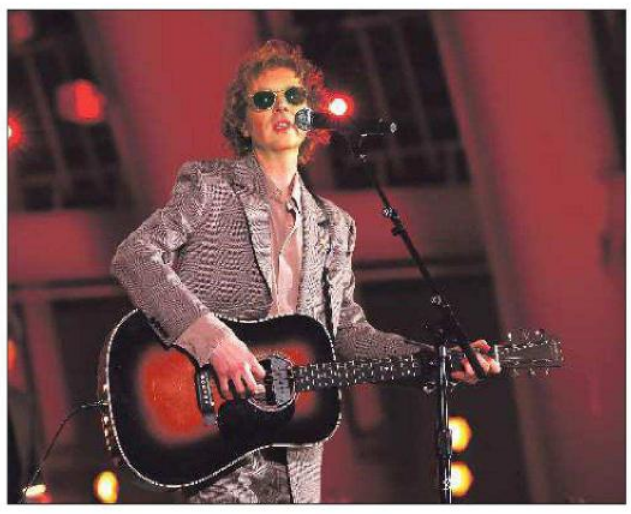
A standing ovation from the crowd for 86-year-old Kristofferson, who joined Cash to sing "Lovin' Her Was Easier (Than Anything I'll Ever Do Again)." Kristofferson, who has attributed his well-documented memory troubles to Lyme disease, was a bit shaky yet movingly determined as he traded lines with Cash, whose father, Johnny, famously played with Kristofferson in the Highwaymen. Very poignant.

— Mikael Wood

3. STURGILL SIMPSON (SATURDAY)

Best banter of the night came from Simpson, who told the audience, "There's only one reason I'm not on a beach in South Asia right now, and that's Willie Nelson." He went on to confess something he said he'd never had the courage to tell Nelson, which was that the only reason he went to Nashville to make country records was "because I grew up listening to country records by Willie Nelson" — records, he added, that exist "outside of the box of what most people think country records can be." Then he said that the only reason he signed to Atlantic Records was because Nelson did, even though "that didn't work out too well for me." Simpson's performance was just as strong: a tough but tender rendition of "I'd Have to Be Crazy," the Steven Fromholz tune Nelson recorded in the mid-'70s.

— M.W.



Randall Michelson

Randall Michelson

Josh Timmermans For Blackbird Presents

JOINING IN the star-studded weekend celebration for Willie Nelson are, clockwise from top, Beck, Kris Kristofferson and Rosanne Cash and Sheryl Crow.

4. CHRIS STAPLETON (SATURDAY)

When you've got Stapleton on your show, you give him the chance to flex his soulful side, which is why he got two of the night's most luscious slow jams: "Last Thing I Needed First Thing This Morning" and "Always on My Mind," both of which he sang with gentle-giant warmth.

— M.W.

5. GEORGE STRAIT AND NELSON (SATURDAY)

It made sense that Strait and Nelson opened with their 2019 novelty tune "Sing One With Willie." If there's anything we know about Nelson, it's that he loves to yuk it up. Strait is noticeably clean-cut compared to Nelson, and many who graced this stage Saturday night, but that speaks to his range and the wide swatch of humanity that loves him. It was also a true delight to hear famously straight-laced Strait tell the audience that Nelson "sang the s— out of" their next song, Townes Van Zandt's "Pancho and Lefty," when he cut it with Merle Haggard in the early '80s.

— E.O. and M.W.

6. ALLISON RUSSELL AND NORAH JONES (SUNDAY)

Russell sang "Seven Spanish Angels" — the gospel-soul gem Nelson cut with Ray Charles in the early '80s — with Jones on piano and harmony vocals. Jones' presence was a good reminder that as much as he's a country singer, Nelson is a jazz vocalist — a master of timing, of salty passing tones, of the brilliant ad lib that you never saw coming (but couldn't forget once you did).

— M.W.

7. LUKAS NELSON (SUNDAY)

Nelson did "Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground" on Saturday, and it was solid. On Sunday night, though, Willie Nelson's son seemed touched by a little of what his dad has long been tuned into: This was searching, soulful, downright celestial — maybe the best performance of the weekend.

— M.W.

8. EMMYLOU HARRIS AND DANIEL LANOIS (SUNDAY)

"The Maker," Lanois' 1989 epic centered on a lyrical spirit quest, received a gorgeous treatment from Harris and its author, she on acoustic guitar and he on sparkling electric.

— E.O.

9. SHERYL CROW (SUNDAY)

Crow said that 27 years ago, she was getting ready to go on stage with Willie Nelson at the Beacon Theatre in New York, and she was nervous. "Kris Kristofferson says, 'Don't try to sing with him, just sing louder than him,' " she recalled, laughing, before adding that Nelson's the only person who's ever offered her dad a joint. Her version of "Crazy," Nelson's lil tune that helped make Patsy Cline a star, brought the crowd to its feet, her honeyed delivery less acrobatic than Cline's, but no less poignant and magical.

— E.O.

10. KEITH RICHARDS (SUNDAY)

The weekend's A-listiest guest, Richards was beaming in a leather jacket and bandanna, telling the crowd, "It's good to be here, it's good to be anywhere." Nelson and Richards teamed on a beautifully crusty version of Waylon Jennings' "We Had It All," which sounded about a million years old, and Billy Joe Shaver's very aptly titled "Live Forever."

— M.W.

COMICS

SUDOKU

		6	9		1		3	
			3		7	1		
				6				
		3	1			2	8	9
7								5
2	1	8			4	7		
				2				
			8		3			
	2		7		5	6		

Level: Gentle

		6			
			1	3	
	1	5		2	
	2		4		
	5	1			
			5		

Level: Gentle

9	7	2	5	3	8	6	4	1
6	1	5	4	7	2	3	8	9
4	3	8	6	1	9	7	2	5
7	4	1	3	9	6	8	5	2
8	5	6	7	2	4	1	9	3
2	9	3	1	8	5	4	6	7
3	2	9	8	6	7	5	1	4
5	6	7	2	4	1	9	3	8
1	8	4	9	5	3	2	7	6

4	1	3	5	6	2
5	6	2	4	3	1
3	4	1	6	2	5
6	2	5	3	1	4
1	3	4	2	5	6
2	5	6	1	4	3

5/2/23

©2023 The Mepham Group. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency. All rights reserved.

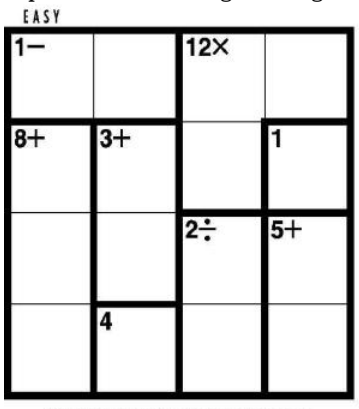
Solutions to Monday's puzzles

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit *www.sudoku.org.uk*.

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

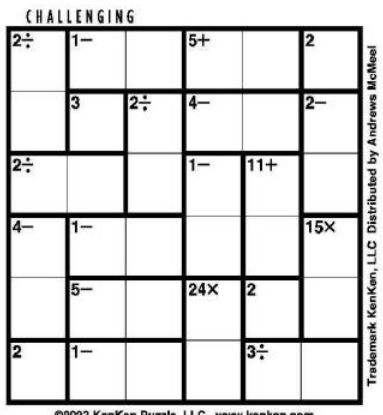
EASY



©2023 KenKen Puzzle, LLC www.kenken.com

Trademark KenKen, LLC Distributed by Andrews McMeel

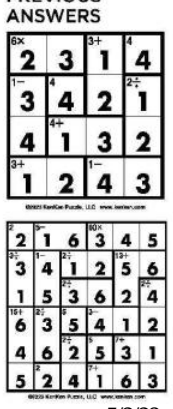
CHALLENGING



©2023 KenKen Puzzle, LLC www.kenken.com

Trademark KenKen, LLC Distributed by Andrews McMeel

PREVIOUS ANSWERS



5/2/23

HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis

Aries (March 21-April 19): Without those peacekeepers who go beyond the call, no progress would be made toward harmony.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): The path only became visible after you discovered it and pointed it out.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): You'll get positive feedback for being unapologetically yourself. Your unique style resonates with people.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): To put too much of yourself into something out of your control is a move akin to leaning. Leaning can lead to falling.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): You will behave in as respectful, clear and considerate a manner as you can, because you like yourself better when operating with the full strength of character.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): With love and kindness as your guide, miracles unfold both inside you and in the world.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Instead of assuming your message has landed, ask for the feedback that will either prove it or reveal the miscommunication.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): While self-checkout, automated phone systems and one-click purchases make it possible to go through a day without interacting with another soul, this is not advised.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll take charge of your experience and approach a new adventure on your own without relying on external factors or the presence of others.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Actions carried out in a particular order and infused with significance will be the pillars of a good day.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): The human animal seems to be the only one obsessed with taking credit for its creations. You'll be more like the other animals today, doing what needs to be done without overthinking your contribution.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You already have the right not to be bothered, so don't feel like it's something you have to earn.

Today's birthday (May 2): A year of making stellar impressions. This and your thoughtful consideration of others will open doors. You'll forge relationships, acquire resources and explore avenues of adventure. More highlights include welcome stretches of financial ease, a stellar alliance and a relationship that challenges you in all your favorite ways. Aries and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 10, 12, 40, 2 and 14.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol and Joyce Nichols Lewis
By Steve Faiella

© 2023 Tribune Content Agency

ACROSS
1 Unlikely election win, say
6 Tidbit in a coffee grinder
10 __-washed jeans
14 Housework task
15 French friend
16 Medicine amount
17 Term of office for Supreme Court justices, e.g.
19 Choir song
20 "__ was saying ... "
21 Quirky
22 U.K. mil. award
24 "The Silence of the Lambs" villain
31 Donkey
32 Part of a tall cake
33 "Selma" director DuVernay
34 Dry shell
37 Milky gem
39 Archipelago unit
41 Investigative department, and what 17-, 24-, 52-, and 64-Across have?
44 Brief digression
45 Point sets, in math
46 Post-WWII alliance
47 Actor Cariou
48 Tall shade trees
50 "Unforgettable" singer __ King Cole
52 Member of an attorney's support staff
57 Desert viper
58 NYC subway org.
59 Post-WWII alliance
61 Open just a crack
64 Places to pick up diving gear
68 Glacier fragment
69 Anna's "Frozen" sister
70 Core belief
71 __ A Sketch
72 Monopoly card
73 Vase-shaped jugs

DOWN
1 Sch. near Hollywood
2 Jam band with a namesake Ben & Jerry's flavor
3 Bulgaria's capital
4 Before, poetically
5 "Grand" Wyoming range
6 Inn offering a morning meal, briefly
7 Ostrichlike bird
8 Football filler
9 Tease
10 Like some committees
11 Artfully shy
12 School-of-thought suffix
13 Work-from-home space, perhaps
18 Inventor Thomas
23 Printing flourish
25 Nude
26 Completely flummoxed
27 Fragrant spring shrub
28 Actress Shire
29 Tennis great Chris
30 "Midnight Cowboy" role
34 Group email starter
35 "I wish I could __ that!": "So gross!"
36 Wasp's defense
38 Tropical trees
40 Jolly December visitor
42 Film spools
43 Social media account that may provide anonymity
49 Ended, as a subscription
51 One small bite
53 Cry of frustration
54 Tough character's claim
55 "... said __ ever"
56 Slender candle
60 Ultrafast 62-Downs
61 Actor Vigoda
62 Fast plane
63 __ de Triomphe
65 Rock & Roll HoF city
66 "__ as directed"
67 Cut down

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

M	A	M	A			I	N	J	U	R	E		C	A	T
A	L	A	N			S	O	O	N	E	R		O	L	E
Y	A	R	N	B	O	M	B	I	N	G			M	P	S
O	M	G		A	M	O	S					R	E	S	T
R	O	O	S	T	E	R		I	O	W	A				
			T	H	R	E	A	D	J	A	C	K	E	R
O	N	C	U	E			M	E	A	G	E	R	L	Y
N	E	A	R		D	A	I	S	Y		W	I	S	E
E	A	R	D	R	O	P	S			C	A	S	E	S
S	T	R	I	N	G	T	H	E	O	R	Y			
			L	A	S	S		F	L	O	S	S	E	S
C	L	A	Y				V	I	E	W		I	R	A
R	I	B		R	O	P	E	L	A	D	D	E	R	S
A	L	L		B	A	T	T	E	R		E	G	O	S
B	Y	E		G	R	A	S	S	Y		V	E	R	Y

5/2/23

BRIDGE

By Frank Stewart

"My partner has a spark of genius," a club player told me. "I've seen him make many good plays. But he has ignition problems; the weak part of his game is the opening lead." My friend said his partner was West in today's deal and led the nine of clubs against four hearts.

"I took the queen and ace," he said, "and led a third club. Declarer won, took the ace of diamonds and ruffed his low diamond in dummy. He carefully cashed dummy's ace of spades before leading a trump to his king. My partner took the ace and had to lead a diamond, and South ruffed, drew trumps and claimed.

"I don't know why partner didn't lead his singleton spade when he had a weak hand and the ace of trumps as a fast reentry. Then we beat the contract easily. I can get in to lead a second spade, and he scores his 10 of trumps on a trump promotion." West's lead wasn't sparkling — nor was East's defense. If East leads almost anything except the ace of clubs at Trick Two, the defense still prevails.

You hold: ♠ Q 9 7 4 3 ♥ 6 ♦ K 10 8 3 ♣ A Q 3. Your partner opens one heart, you respond one spade, he rebids two hearts and you try 2NT. Partner then bids three clubs. What do you say?

Answer: Partner's bidding suggests six hearts, four clubs and minimum values; he wants no part of game or notrump. (With a better hand, he might have bid two clubs at his second turn or jumped to four hearts at his third turn.) Pass or bid three hearts. Don't bid 3NT.

North dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ A K J 10 6 2
♥ 7 3
♦ Q
♣ K J 10 4

WEST
♠ 8
♥ A 10 4
♦ J 9 6 5 4 2
♣ 9 8 7

EAST
♠ Q 9 7 4 3
♥ 6
♦ K 10 8 3
♣ A Q 3

SOUTH
♠ 5
♥ K Q J 9 8 5 2
♦ A 7
♣ 6 5 2

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♥	All Pass

Opening lead – ♣ 9

Tribune Content Agency

ASK AMY

Frustrated with in-laws

Dear Amy: My husband and I have been married for 19 years.

His brother is an alcoholic, which is common in his family. He has been unfaithful to his wife on numerous occasions.

At a family event (about six years ago), he made sexual advances toward me.

I told my husband that his brother makes me uncomfortable and I don't want him near our kids with his drinking, but didn't want to cause a huge family rift.

We are the more successful/healthy of all the siblings and are perceived as snobby.

We celebrate holidays without my in-laws, as they believe we should just ignore these issues.

My husband attended a family gathering (solo) and brought his new sports car (which cost six figures). His brother took the vehicle for a ride (drunk) without his permission. The brothers have not spoken since.

My mother-in-law is aware of these issues. She spends holidays with them and still invites us to their gatherings, despite knowing that we don't want to attend.

We would only reconsider reconciliation if his brother were to receive treatment and be in recovery.

My husband and I have been in therapy for years working through his childhood trauma.

The family issues run deep, and he does feel lucky to have space to grow into his own person and not be enmeshed like his siblings.

My in-laws have an air about them that we are wrong and keeping the family apart, which is hurtful. Why can't they see the importance of having an individual relationship with us?

Frustrated in N.Y.

Dear Frustrated: Despite your evident and understandable frustration, the tone of your question reveals a strong desire to control your in-laws — to get all of them to recognize the impact of your brother-in-law's drinking, get them to accept your perspective and even convince them to have "an individual relationship" with your family.

You also seem to resent the fact that they continue to invite and include you in their family events.

You have made choices according to your family values and preferences. They're doing the same.

You refuse to enable your brother-in-law's drinking, or even to be around him if he might be drinking. That's an understandable choice.

Your next step should be to accept the messy reality of this family, without clinging to the notion that you might have the power to change it.

In addition to therapy, you and your husband might benefit from Al-anon meetings (*al-anon.org*).

Dear Amy: My friend (who is one year younger) has a habit of telling me she's "proud" of me for doing big and small things.

I bought a house; she said she was proud of me. I said I was going out of town; she said she was proud of me.

I heard her tell another friend that she thought her house was "adorable."

I can't tell if she means to belittle people or if I'm blowing it out of proportion. Thoughts?

Not Adorable

Dear NOT: I think your friend is unaware that her comments seem patronizing. "I'm proud of you" may be her "I'm happy for you."

Talk to her! Tell her, "When you say, 'I'm proud of you,' it feels like you are infantilizing me. I don't think you mean it that way, but it bothers me."

Email questions to Amy Dickinson at *askamy@amydickinson.com*.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

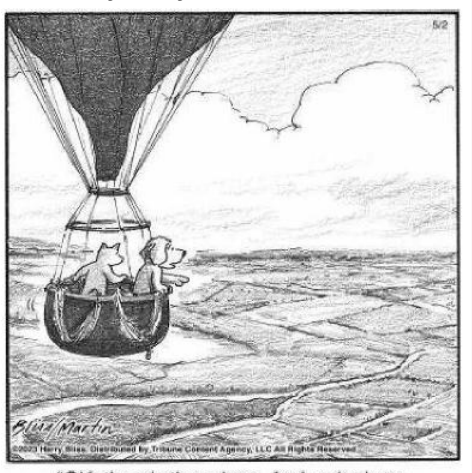
5-2
©2023 Bil Keane, Inc.
Dist. by King Features Synd.
www.familycircus.com
BIL and JEFF KEANE
"That's a period. It means wait and go for a breath."

DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham

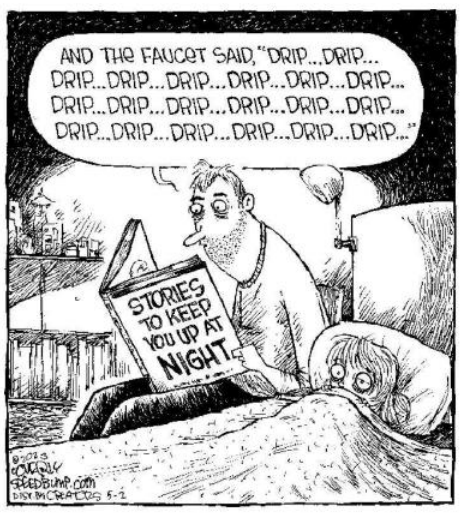
REPLY ALL LITE By Donna Lewis

MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson

BLISS By Harry Bliss



SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly


AND THE FAUCET SAID, "DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP..."
STORIES TO KEEP YOU UP AT NIGHT

COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz

LA CUCARACHA'S
WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE HOSTING A CINCO DE MAYO PARTY...
¡5!
1. BREAK THE GOOD NEWS.
CONGRATS, VERO! I'M SO HAPPY THAT WE'RE HOSTING THE PARTY AT YOUR PLACE.
WHAT!? AT MY PLACE? BUT WE HAVEN'T EVEN... DISCUSSED IT FIRST!
CONGRATS TO THE BOTH OF YOU!

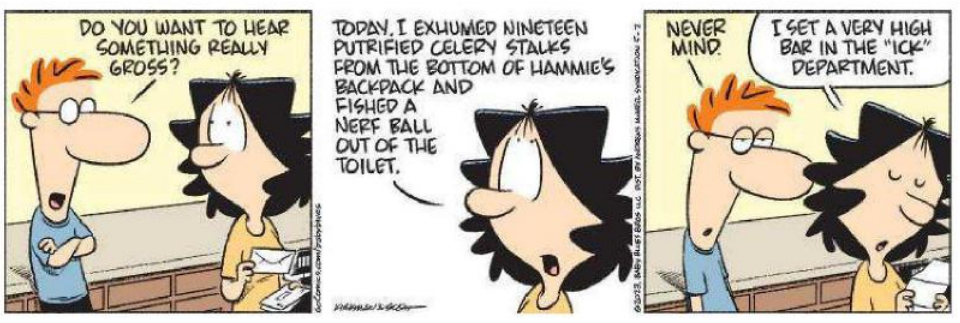
PICKLES By Brian Crane

YOU'RE GIVING UP PAINTING, MOM?
I MIGHT AS WELL. NO ONE LIKES THEM.
THAT'S NOT TRUE! I LIKE THEM.
HOW MANY DO YOU HAVE HANGING IN YOUR HOUSE?
OH, TWO OR THREE.
I KNOW. I'VE SEEN THEM HANGING BEHIND THE COATS IN YOUR CLOSET.

CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia

I'M GONNA BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU, MILES. ANY MINUTE, OUR PARENTS ARE GONNA COME BUSTING THROUGH THAT DOOR, AND WE CAN'T BE HERE WHEN THEY DO.
I'M AFRAID WE HAVE TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT.
YOU MEAN RUN AWAY? FOREVER?
IT'S THE ONLY MOVE WE HAVE LEFT, DUDE. HOW DID YOU THINK THIS WAS ALL GONNA END?
I DUNNO...
...NOT WITH US EATING BEANS OUT OF A CAN IN AN ABANDONED RAILCAR.
HOW DO WE FEEL ABOUT CORN?

BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman


DO YOU WANT TO HEAR SOMETHING REALLY GROSS?
TODAY, I EXHUMED NINETEEN PUTRIFIED CELERY STALKS FROM THE BOTTOM OF HAMMIE'S BACKPACK AND FISHED A NERF BALL OUT OF THE TOILET.
NEVER MIND.
I SET A VERY HIGH BAR IN THE "ICK" DEPARTMENT.

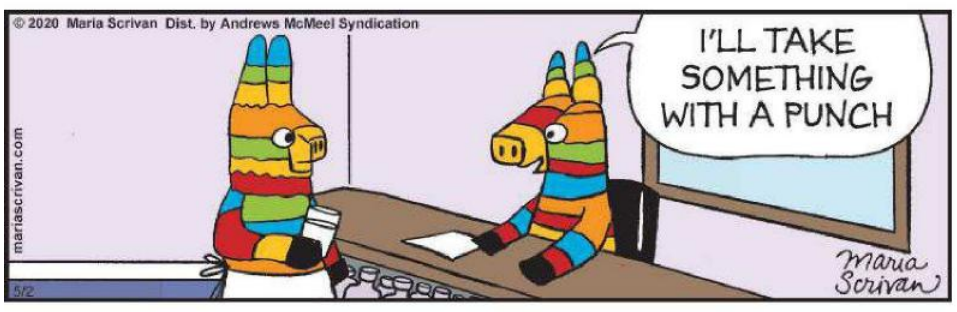
CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell

FIXED NEWS CANCELS TUCKY TARLESON.
WHICH ONE WAS HE?
THE RACIST ONE WHO LIED A LOT.
YOU GONNA HAVE TO NARROW THAT DOWN.
HE'S THE ONE WHO ADMITTED HE LIED A LOT...
...AND YET HIS FANS DIDN'T CARE AND STILL WATCHED HIM ALL THE TIME.
THAT'S 'CAUSE HE TRUSTWORTHY.
WHAT?
AIN'T NOTHIN' MORE TRUTHFUL THAN A LIAR WHO TELL YOU HE LIE.

CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS...
SEPTEMBER 12, 2018
APPARENTLY THE SECOND OBJECT TO STRIKE THE ASTEROID 'DIMORPHOS' WAS THE BACKYARD GRILL THAT WAS LAUNCHED BACK IN 2018 BY A GENTLEMAN NAMED ED CRANKSHAFT!
BATIUK & DAVIS

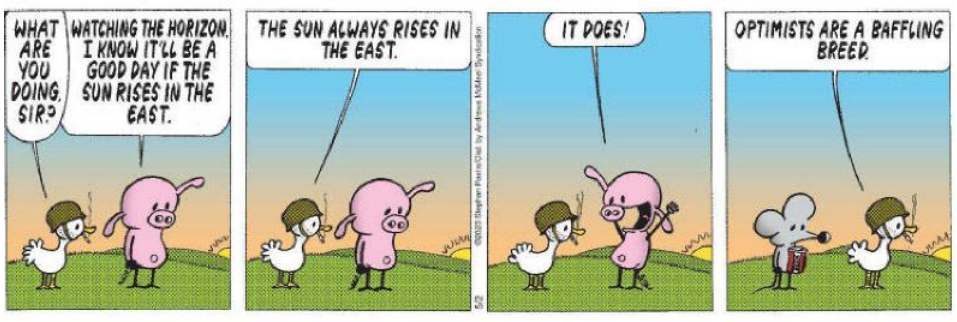
HALF FULL By Maria Scrivan



JUMP START By Robb Armstrong

There's gotta be life on a planet other than Earth!
What if Earth is a "test"?
If we take good care of this planet, and resist violent solutions to problems-
Then life would sprout up all over the universe!
Now you tell US!
SCHOOL

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis


WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SIR?
WATCHING THE HORIZON. I KNOW IT'LL BE A GOOD DAY IF THE SUN RISES IN THE EAST.
THE SUN ALWAYS RISES IN THE EAST.
IT DOES!
OPTIMISTS ARE A BAFFLING BREED.

MACANUDO By Liniers

SELFIE.
HE PUTS ALL OF HIS LIFE ON SOCIAL MEDIA.
HIS IMAGE, HIS THOUGHTS, EVERYTHING.
AND NO ONE CARES.
LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE EXFLUENCER.

LIO By Mark Tatulli

BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall

BUMSTEAD, WHEN DID I PROMOTE YOU TO OFFICE MANAGER?
GOSH, BOSS, I DON'T REMEMBER THE DATE... WHY?
OH, IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER, I GUESS
I WAS JUST WONDERING WHAT I MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING AT THE TIME

ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy

DANNY - I AM NOT SENDING MY CHICKEN TERIYAKI RECIPE TO YOUR GIRLFRIEND!
I CAN SEND IT TO YOU AND YOU CAN SHARE IT WITH HER - I DON'T WANT HER TO THINK I'M ADVISING HER ON HER COOKING SKILLS!
TAMARA WOULDN'T THINK THAT... SHE LIKES YOU!
AND I WANT TO KEEP IT THAT WAY

TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter

WOWZA! THAT MUSTA BEEN ONE DOOZY OF A PARTY LAST FALL. I SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE WINTER.
FIRST TIME HIBERNATING, EH?
www.tundracomics.com
©Tundra 2023

BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro

SIX CHIX By Bianca Xunise

DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan

BYE, NEIL! DON'T BE A STRANGER!
WHO WOULD THINK THAT THE SUDDEN REAPPEARANCE OF AN OLD FRIEND COULD CAUSE SO MUCH TROUBLE?
KNOCK KNOCK
NORMAN!
D..D..DARLENE!
WHO THE HECK IS THIS?!

FRAZZ By Jef Mallett

MY DAD WAS ON ONE OF HIS RANTS.
"YA YA BUT TEACH A MAN TO FISH AND HE'LL EAT FOR A LIFETIME."
SO I ASKED HIM TO TAKE ME FISHING.
I'M STILL WAITING.
KEEP TEACHING.

MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell

SHELTER STORIES
"KATIE"
I KNOW YOU'RE THINKING "THE WORLD'S A MESS, EVERYTHING'S CRAZY..."
DO I REALLY NEED A DOG AT THIS TIME!?!"
YES, YOU DO. I'LL HELP YOU GET THROUGH IT.
mutts.com

NON SEQUITUR By Wiley

I HEARD IT TOOK ONLY TWO WEEKS TO WRITE THE ALL-TIME BEST-SELLING NOVEL, SO MAYBE YOU JUST NEED TO TYPE FASTER
THE ANTI-MUSE
WILEY © 2023 WILEY INK, LTD.

PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz

Fail to the chief

PHIL CARUSO HBO

JUSTIN THEROUX, left, and Woody Harrelson in "White House Plumbers."

['**Plumbers,**' from E1]
2007 memoir "Integrity: Good People, Bad Choices, and Life Lessons from the White House," by Egil "Bud" Krogh, head of Richard Nixon's Special Investigation Unit — called the Plumbers, because its purpose was to stop leaks — the series focuses on the misadventures of brothers-in-abbreviated-first-names, former CIA operative E. Howard Hunt (Woody Harrelson) and ex-FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy (Justin Theroux). Krogh (Rich Sommer) gave them their first job, overseeing the burglary of the office of the psychiatrist of the Pentagon Papers leaker, Daniel Ellsberg, on a fruitless search for damaging information. The Watergate gig — the least extreme of Liddy's ideas for messing with the opposition — famously followed.

Even before starting to watch, one would expect a comedy, and that "White House Plumbers" comes from writers Alex Gregory and Peter Huyck and director David Mandel, who all worked on HBO's "Veep," only doubles that expectation. And so it is. When Liddy and Hunt go to reconnoiter the psychiatrist's office, they wear terrible wigs by way of disguise. The bungling of the break-in — there was more than one, trying to get it right — borders on farce. (Even Nixon, on his infamous tapes, can be heard calling it a "comedy of errors.")

With his greasepaint-black hair and mustache and his pulp-fiction posturing, Liddy was in life already three-quarters of the way to a caricature. Even those with a passing knowledge of him are liable to know that he ate a rat to cure himself of a childhood fear and would hold his hand in a flame to demonstrate how tough he was. (You can find him discussing these things with David Letterman.)

Indeed, Liddy's whole adult life can seem like one long act of overcompensation, and his on-the-record statements, merely translated to the screen — including his readiness to assassinate, and if necessary, to be assassinated, asking only for "a clean head shot" — do come off as bizarrely humorous. Theroux invests his speech with a psychotic precision that doesn't resemble the real Liddy, yet it gets the point across. Nothing in Hunt's biography, on the other hand, seems especially humorous, but Harrelson plays him at medium-high boil, with a thrusting chin and gravelly voice and often in some sort of emotional extremity. Together, they enact an on-again, off-again battling bromance — a temperamentally mismatched but ideologically compatible couple, as in countless buddy-cop flicks, with the difference being that they're failures.

"Veep" is a certified great comedy, but it's one thing to create a show about Washington monkeyshines using original characters in original stories and another to make it with some necessary regard for real events and people, especially when, in Hunt's case, their life was touched with tragedy. (I would be more specific, but it feels like a spoiler.) As a result, "White House Plumbers" suffers from a kind of tonal confusion that keeps it from being wholly successful either as comedy or, as well-researched as it is — you can find the oddest of these events in the voluminous record — as believable history.

In the role of Dorothy Hunt, who would play a major role in this story, Lena Headey — perhaps best known as Cersei Lannister on "Game of Thrones" — seems to be acting in a different series altogether. As Hunt's children, Zoe Levin (haunted Lisa), Liam James (adoring Saint John), Kiernan Shipka (model daughter Kevan) and Tre Ryder (young and innocent David) similarly inhabit a family drama tonally distinct from the satirical political story. (The Liddy children, by contrast, appear only briefly, lined up on the stairs like the Von Trapps to greet the Hunts at a dinner party, before being sent back to their rooms and out of the series. At which point Liddy proceeds to entertain his guests with an LP of Hitler's speeches — played loud — while Hunt begs for some jazz.)

That's not to say that "White House Plumbers" isn't interesting or watchable, or sometimes as funny as it wants to be; there's too much talent behind and in front of the camera for that to be the case. There's some fine bumbling in the burglary scenes. The production is first-rate, the period work never rings false, crowd scenes are not threadbare, and choice D.C. locations keep the weirdness real. A varied supporting cast includes Ike Barinholtz as Watergate conspirator Jeb Magruder; Gary Cole as Mark Felt, later Deep Throat; F. Murray Abraham as Judge John Sirica; Tony Plana as Eugenio "Muscolito" Martinez, the most recognizable of the Cuban burglars; Toby Huss, quietly stealing scenes as burglar James McCord; and Kathleen Turner in a wild, coarse turn as scandal-embroiled lobbyist Dita Beard.

And there are elements, of course, that speak to our present condition. Even though it came back to bite him, Nixon's willingness to break the law — and order others to break it — does seem to mark the beginning of a win-by-any-means age. At the same time, the archival clips that punctuate the series indicate a markedly different time, when the news was not the business of pundits, and a paranoid president's own party could convince him it would be best for the country if he let someone else drive. It almost makes you nostalgic.

'White House Plumbers'

Where: HBO
When: 9 p.m. Mondays
Streaming: HBO Max
Rating: TV-MA (may be unsuitable for children under the age of 17 with an advisory for coarse language)

Film academy issues new campaign rules

[**Academy,** from E1]
pensive and intense, the new changes mark the most significant overhaul of the regulations since their inception in 1994.

Those regulations came under fresh scrutiny in January after Riseborough secured her unexpected nomination following a brief but intense grassroots campaign of emails, social media posts and celebrity-hosted screenings to highlight her performance, with A-listers like Gwyneth Paltrow, Jennifer Aniston, Edward Norton, Charlize Theron and others lending their support to the cause.

Riseborough's nomination for a film that earned a mere $27,000 at the box office led some to question whether the aggressive lobbying — spearheaded by Riseborough's manager, Jason Weinberg, and actor Mary McCormack, the wife of "To Leslie" director Michael Morris — violated the academy's campaign rules. Fueling the debate over Riseborough's nod were the exclusions of Viola Davis ("The Woman King") and Danielle Deadwyler ("Till"), who were both considered strong contenders, from the nominees.

After conducting a review, the academy's leadership decided to let Riseborough's nomination stand. But in a statement announcing that decision, film academy Chief Executive Bill Kramer acknowledged that "components of the regulations must be clarified to help create a better framework for respectful, inclusive, and unbiased campaigning."

In the lead-up to this year's nominations, actor Frances Fisher posted on social media that Davis and Deadwyler were "locks" and encouraged others to vote for Riseborough — a form of lobbying that would now be disallowed.

Clarifying what is permissible in terms of lobbying, the new rules state that while members may praise films and performances in general terms and encourage others to see them, they may not discuss their voting preferences or those of other members. "You may not attempt to encourage other members to vote for or not vote for any motion picture or achievement," the regulations state.

In an effort to level the playing field, smaller films like "To Leslie," which often lack the marketing resources of bigger competitors, will now be able to apply to the academy for a reduced rate for inclusion on the organization's digital screener platform, giving them a chance for greater visibility among the group's more than 10,000 members.

It remains to be seen to what extent the organization will be able to police the communication of its thousands of members, many of whom have both personal and professional social media accounts. As many have pointed out since the Riseborough flap, soliciting votes for friends and allies through personal connections is a practice virtually as old as the Oscars themselves.

To enforce the new rules, which will be reviewed annually, the organization announced the establishment of a new process for reporting violations and further clarified potential penalties, which may include disqualifying a film or performance for consideration, rescinding a nomination, revoking a member's voting privileges or suspending or expelling them from the group.

"The Academy is committed to conducting a fair, clear, and equitable awards process focused on honoring creative excellence," the organization says in its new regulations. "Members are expected to make their awards voting decisions based on the artistic and technical merits of all eligible motion pictures, performances, and achievements."

Los Angeles Times

YOU DO ADU

Actual house, meet extra small house.

A free digital newsletter about, you guessed it, ADUs.

Maybe you need more space. Maybe you just need extra income. But how do you know if building an accessory dwelling unit, or ADU, is right for you?

Start with **You Do ADU**, a six-week newsletter series from the L.A. Times. We'll guide you through building an ADU in California — including financing, planning and solving common problems — so you can make the right decision for you and your property.

Free for subscribers! Scan the code or visit **latimes.com/ADU** to sign up.